

The Effigies of John Flavell.
Ætatis suæ 50 Anno Dom 1680.



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THE METHOD OF GRACE,

In bringing home the

Eternal Redemption,

Contrived by the FATHER, and accomplished by the SON through the effectual application of the Spirit unto GOD's Elect; being the Second Part of

GOSPEL REDEMPTION:

WHEREIN

The great mysterie of our Union and Communion with Christ is opened and applied, Unbelievers invited, False-pretenders convicted, every mans claim to Christ examined, and the misery of Christless persons discovered and bewailed.

By *John Flavell* Minister of the Gospel.

Which things the Angels desire to look into, 1 Pet. 1. 12.

Πίστις ἡ κατὰ τὰς λογικὰς μεθόδους, ἡ ψυχὴν εἰς συγκατάβασιν ἕλκουσα πίστις οὐχ ἡ γαμψεγκαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἡ τῷ πνεύματι ἐνεργείας ἀκωλυομένη. *Basilius, in Psal.* 115.

Χριστοῦ μίμησις χριστιανῶν πλήρωσις. *Nazianzen.* John Spitsbury

LONDON,

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To the Worſhipful John Upton *of* Lupton, *Eſq*; *and the moſt accompliſhed and vertuous Lady his dear Conſort; the Author wiſhes Grace, Mercy and Peace.*

Honoured and Worthy Friends,

IT was a comfortable expreſſion which *Ambroſe* uſed in his Funeral Oration at the death of *Theodoſius*; (*a*) that though he were gone, yet he was not wholly gone; for he had left *Honorius* with others of his Children behind him, in whom *Theodoſius* ſtill lived. Your renowned and worthy *Anceſtors* are gone, yet bleſſed be God, they are not wholly gone; whilſt the prudence, piety and publickneſs of their Spi-

(*a*) *Theodoſius tantus imperator receſſit à nobis, ſed non totus receſſit; reliquit enim nobis liberos ſuos, in quibus debemus eum agnoſcere.* Ambroſ. in obit. Theodoſ.

rits ſtill lives and flouriſhes in you, the top-branch of a renowned and religious Family. 'Tis a great truth which *Philo Judæus* recommends to the obſervation of all poſterity (*b*) that it is not a natural deſcent from the moſt honourable and illuſtrious progenitors, nor the greateſt affluence of riches and pleaſures that makes a man either honourable or happy; but the inhabitation of God in his ſoul, as in his Temple, though (ſaith he) thoſe that never taſted Religion nor have ſeen its glory will not credit this aſſertion. The ſoul which is filled with God, ſaith (*c*) *Plotinus*, and brings forth the beautiful fruits of righteouſneſs, this is the truly noble ſoul: our new birth makes us more honourable than our natural birth, let our birth-right dignities be what they will. The Children of Nobles are by nature the Children of wrath even as others: *omnis ſanguis concolor*, all blood is of one colour; it is all tainted in *Adam*, and mingled together in his poſterity: there is no King ſaith (*d*) *Seneca*,

[b] Τοῖς δὲ ὑμνῆσι τὴν εὐγένειαν ὡς μέγιστον ἀγαθὸν καὶ μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν αἰτίαν, ὁ μισεῖσθαι ἐπιμηκτέον, εἰ πρῶτον μὴ οἴονται τοὺς ἐκ παλαιοπλούτων καὶ παλαιενδόξων εὐγενεῖς, μήτε τοῦ πεφυκέναι ἀφ' ὧν αὐχοῦσι γενέσθαι, —— Βουληθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς δεῖξαι ἡμερότητα καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν τοῦθ' ἱδρύσασθαι, νεῶν ἀξιοπρεπέστερον ὅπου γῆς ἐχ εὗρε λογισμοῦ κρείττω. ὁ γὰρ νεὼς ἀγαλμαφορεῖ τὸ ἀγαθὸν, κἂν ἀπιστῶσί τινες τοῦ μὴ γευσαμένων σοφίας, ἢ χείλεσιν ἄκεως. *Philo Judæus* περὶ εὐγενείας, A Book fit for the hands of all Gentlemen, tranſlated by *Laurentius Humphredus* in his excellent Tract *de nobilitate.*

[c] Ψυχὴ πληρωθεῖσα θεοῦ γεννᾷ τὸ κάλλος, γεννᾷ τὸν δικαιοσύνην. *Plotinus.*

(*d*) *Seneca*,

(d) *Seneca*, which roſe not from a ſervant: there is no *ſervant* which roſe not from a *King*: theſe things have been blended and toſſed to and fro, by a long variety.

[d] *Neminem regem non ex ſervis eſſe oriundum, neminem ſervum non ex regibus: omnia iſta longa varietas miſcuit, & ſurſum deorſum fortuna verſavit.* Senec. Epiſt. 44.

But though the priviledges of natural birth ſignifie nothing as to eternal ſalvation, yet in civil and political reſpects and conſiderations, thoſe that by birth, education or eſtate poſſeſs an higher ſtation in the world, differ from the vulgar as ſtars of greater magnitude and luſtre: their intereſt and influence is great in theſe things, and the welfare of Kingdoms (e) greatly depends upon them.

[e] *Qui ſumma tractant gubernacula, qui privatis, qui publicis rebus interſunt ac præſunt, niſi viri ſummi ac nobiles? Quis in ſenatu præit, in foro præſidet, domi, foris imperat? Principes ſanè viri & nobiles: quis jubet, vetat, agit, ſatagit, quis verſat & volvit omnia, quis leges fingit, & refingit, quis in pace rempublicam, contra hoſtes bella adminiſtrat, præterquam magni viri & nobiles? Nec mirum ei rerum ſumma committi, qui & virtute ſua, & commendatione majorum, ad hominum famam & exiſtimationem dimanavit.* Laurentius Humphredus de nobilitate, pag. (mihi) 64.

It is therefore a great deſign of the enemy of mankind to corrupt perſons of eminent rank and quality both in religion and morality; and by their influence and example to infect and poyſon the whole body politick: and his ſucceſs

ſucceſs herein deſerves to be greatly lamented and bewailed. Perſons of eminency are more eſpecially (*f*) obliged to ſhun baſe and ſordid actions. *Hierom* profeſſed (*g*) he ſaw nothing deſirable in *nobility* except this, that ſuch perſons are bound by a certain kind of neceſſity not to degenerate from the probity, or ſtain the glory of their *Anceſtors*. But alas! how many in our times have not only expoſed Chriſtianity to contempt, but obſcured (*h*) the glory of their own families, and the Kingdom in which they had their birth and breeding; ſo that if you will take right marks of your way to Heaven, you will have little direction from thoſe of your own rank, but as (*i*) Mariners take their direction at Sea, by looking up to the Heavens, ſo muſt you. In this general corruption it is very hard to eſcape infection: many (as *Salvian* complained)

[f] *In maxima fortuna, minima eſt licentia.* Saluſt.

[g] *Nihil aliud video in nobilitate appetendum, niſi quod nobiles quadam neceſſitate conſtringuntur ne ab antiquorum probitate degenerent.* Hieron.

[h] *Faxit Deus opt. max. ut eum finem conſequatur, quem mihi propoſui, quo tandem aliquando vetus & veneranda nobilitas redeat, quæ prudentiâ & doctrinâ gloriâ, & factorum ſplendore, majorum laudes obſcuret, inuſtamque auguſto nomini ſuo maculam tollat & deleat.* Humph. de Nob. p. 58.

[i] *Eadem ratione hanc vitæ viam quæri oportet, qua in alto iter navibus quæritur; niſi aliquid cœli lumen obſervent, incertis curſibus vagantur: quiſquis rectum iter vitæ tenere nititur, non terram debet aſpicere, ſed cœlum; & ut apertius loquar, non hominem debet ſequi ſed Deum: itaq; ſi oculos in cœlum ſemper intendas, & ſolem quâ oritur, obſerves, eumque habes vitæ quaſi navigii ducem; ſua ſponte pedes irreviam dirigentur,* Lactan. lib. 6. c. 8.

(*k*) are

(*k*) are compelled to be *evil*, leſt they ſhould be accounted *vile*: and incur the offence of God, to avoid the ſlights and cenſures of men. Although there is no more reaſon why they ſhould be offended at the rational and religious pleaſures, you and other pious Gentlemen take in the ways of godlineſs, than there is that you ſhould envy the ſinful pleaſures they take in the ways of wickedneſs. It was an excellent Apology that *Tertullian* made for the Chriſtians of his time againſt the *Gentiles*, (*l*) Wherein (ſaith he) do we offend you, if we believe there are other pleaſures? If we will not partake with you in your delights, it is only our own injury: we reject your pleaſures, and you are not delighted with ours.

[k] *Mali eſſe coguntur ne viles habeantur.* Salv. de Gubernat.

[l] *Quo vos offendimus ſi alias præſumimus voluptates? ſi oblectari nolumus, noſtra injuria eſt: reprobamus quæ placent vobis, nec vos noſtra delectant.* Tertul. Apolog. adv. Gent.

But by how much the infection ſpreads and prevails among thoſe of your Order, by ſo much the more we have reaſon to value you, and all thoſe that remain ſound and untainted both in religion and morality, as perſons worthy of ſingular reſpect and honour, and bleſſed be God there is yet a number of ſuch left.

Sir,

Sir, It was a ſpecial happineſs which *Chryſoſtom* earneſtly recommended to perſons of quality, that they would ſo order their converſations, that their Parents might rather glory in them, than they in their Parents; (*m*) otherwiſe (ſaith he) it is better to riſe to honour from a contemptible Parent, than to be contemptible from an honourable Parent: but bleſſed be God, you and your worthy Anceſtors mutually reflect honour upon each other.

[m] *Melius eſt de contemptibili fieri clarum, quam de claro genere contemptibilem eſſe.* Chryſoſtom in Mat. 4. *Nec fieri poteſt quin hunc comitetur ignobilitas etiamſi vel Avis, vel Proavis natus ſit vitâ inculpatis, qui ab eorum ſtudiis alienus eſt, ſeque longiſſimè tum dictis, tum factis à nobilitate disjungit.*

Had God ſuffered you to degenerate, as many do, it would have been but a poor conſolation to have ſaid, my *Progenitors* were men of honour, the love and delight of their Country. This as (*n*) one excellently expreſſeth it, would be the ſame thing as if one that is blind himſelf, ſhould boaſt what a ſharp and piercing ſight his father had, or one that is lame himſelf ſhould glory in thoſe feats of activity his Grandfather performed: but God (to whoſe bounty therefore

[n] *Quid oculis capto ad viſum profuerit perſpicax majorum acies, cùm eâ privatus eſt? Vel quid ad interpretandi facultatem, impeditæ linguæ hominem juverit, parentes vel avos fuiſſe vocales? Pari ratione, nec injuſtis juſti parentes, nec luxu perditis, temperantes: nec omnino boni malis quicquam utilitatis afferunt, &c.* Philo. περὶ εὐγενείας.

fore you are doubly obliged) hath made you the inheritor of their vertues, as well as of their lands, and therein fulfilled many thouſand prayers which have been poured out to God upon your account. But I muſt forbear, leſt I provoke others to envy, and draw upon my ſelf the ſuſpicion of flattery: what hath been already ſaid may ſerve for a ſufficient reaſon of this Dedication. I know the (o) agreeableneſs of ſuch diſcourſes to the pious diſpoſitions of your ſouls is of it ſelf ſufficient to make it welcome to you. It is a Treatiſe of Chriſt, yea, of the method of grace in the application of Chriſt; than which no ſubject can be more neceſſary to ſtudy, or ſweet to experience. (p) All goodneſs is attractive, how powerfully attractive then muſt Jeſus Chriſt be who is the ocean of all goodneſs, from whom all ſtreams of goodneſs are derived, and into whom they all empty themſelves? (q) If *Pindarus* could ſay of the lovely *Theoxenus*, that whoſoever ſaw that auguſt and comely face of his, and was not ſurprized with amazement and inflamed with love, muſt have an heart of Adamant or Braſs, what

(a) then

o *Quando bona audientis & grata mens eſt, facilè aſſentitur ſermonibus veritatis.* Chryſo. Hom. 26. in Mat.

p Ὑμῖν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ὃ ἐρᾶσιν ἄνθρωποι ἢ τὸ ἀγαθόν· ἀνέλκει πάντα καὶ ἀναστρέφει ταῖς οἰκείαις ἐλάμψεσιν ὡς ἥλιος. *Plato.*

q Ἀκτῖνας προσώπου μαρμαρυζούσας δρόσοις ὃς μὴ πόθῳ κυμαίνεται, ὡς ἀδάμαντος.

then ſhall we reſemble that mans heart unto, that hath no fervorous affections kindled in it by the incomparable beauty of Chriſt! A beauty which excels in luſtre and brightneſs that viſible light which ſo dazels our eyes (r) as that light doth darkneſs it ſelf, as *Plato* ſpeaks of the divine light. Chriſt is ὑπερβαλλόντως καλὸς an inexpreſſible beauty, and all other beauties are but εἰκὼν καὶ σκιὰ, an image, nay a ſhadow of his beauty. How was holy *Ignatius* raviſhed with deſires after Chriſt when (s) he cried out, O how I long to be thrown into the jaws of thoſe Lions which I hear roaring for me! and if they will not diſpatch me the ſooner, καὶ βιάσομαι, I will enforce them to it by violence, that I may enjoy the ſight of my bleſſed Jeſus. (t) O my heart (ſaith another) how is it thou art not drawn up by the very root by thy deſires after Chriſt? The neceſſity and the trial of our union with, and intereſt in this lovely Lord Jeſus, is the main ſubject of this diſcourſe: without the perſonal application of Chriſt by faith, our hopes of Heaven are but deluding dreams, *Heb.* 3. 11. I ſware in my wrath εἰ εἰσελεύσονται, if

r Τὸ νοητὸν φῶς, τὸ ἀφθέγκτον πάντων ποσῶτῳ τῷ ὁρατῷ λαμπρότερόν τε καὶ ἀνυφειδέστερον ὅσῳπερ ἥλιος αὐτός. *Plato.*

s Ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸ πῦρ τὸ φιλύϋλον, ἀλλ' ὕδωρ ἀλλομένον, &c. ἀναίμην ἐγὼ θηρίων, ἵνα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπιτύχω. *Ignatius Epiſt.*

t *O Cor meum quomodo non te evellis poſt tantum decorem?* Nieremberg. *Vivere remuo, ut Chriſto vivam.*

if they ſhall enter into my reſt: what then? Nay, there is all: but it is a dreadful *Apoſiopeſis* (as one calls it) ſuch a pauſe, as may juſtly ſhake every vein of the unbelievers heart: *if they ſhall enter*, as if he had ſaid, if ever they come into my glory, then ſay I am no God, for I have ſworn the contrary.

I will not be tireſom, but conclude all in few requeſts to you, and to God for you both. That which I requeſt of you is,

(1.) That you will ſearch and try your own hearts by theſe truths, eſpecially now when ſo great tryals are like to be made of every mans root and foundation in Religion. Account that your firſt work, which *Bellarmine* calls the firſt error of *Proteſtants*, to make ſure your intereſt in Chriſt; (*u*) every thing is as its foundation is: a true *Diamond* will endure the ſmarteſt ſtroke of the Hammer, but a falſe one will fly.

(*u*) *Primus hæreticorum error eſt, poſſe fideles eam notitiam habere de ſua gratia, ut certâ fide ſtatuant ſibi remiſſa eſſe peccata.* Bellarm. de juſtific. lib. 3. cap. 3.

(2.) That you be humble under all that dignity and honour which God hath put upon you: be ye cloathed with humility. It was the glory of the Primitive Chriſtians, that they * did not ſpeak but live great things.

* *Non eloquimur magna, ſed vivimus.* Tertul. Apolog.

Humility will be the luſter of your other excellencies: Eſtates and Honours are but appendants and fine trappings which add not any real worth, yet (x) how are ſome vain minds puffed up with theſe things! but ye have not ſo learned Chriſt.

* *Narrant* Bucephalum *quoties nudus eſſet, equiſonem admittere in tergum voluiſſe: ſed regiis phaleris & bullis decoratum, neminem præter regem ipſum tuliſſe: ita ſanè ſit in novis hiſce optimatibus, &c.*

(3.) That you ſteddily perſevere in thoſe good wayes of God in which you have walked, and beware of heart or life apoſtaſie. You expect happineſs whilſt God is in Heaven, and God expects holineſs from you whilſt you are on earth. It was an excellent truth which *Toſſanus* (y) recommended to his poſterity in his laſt Will and Teſtament from his own experience. I beſeech you, ſaith he, my dear Children and Kindred, that you never be aſhamed of the truths of the Goſpel, either by reaſon of ſcandals in the Church, or perſecutions upon it; truth may labour for a time but cannot be conquered, and I have often found God to be wonderfully preſent with them that walk before him in truth, though

y *Obteſtor etiam vos liberos, & generos chariſſimos ne illius veritatis evangelicæ unquam vos pudeat: poteſt enim laborare, ſed non vinci veritas: & non ſemel expertus ſum Dominum Deum mirabiliter adeſſe iis qui coram ipſo ambulant, & in ſua vocatione ſedulò & integrè verſantur; licet ad tempus, odiis, aut ſimultatibus, aut calumniis agitentur.* Melch. Adams in vita Toſſani.

for

for a time they may be oppreſt with troubles and calumnies.

(4.) Laſtly, That you keep a ſtrict and conſtant watch over your own hearts, leſt they be enſnared by the tempting, charming and dangerous ſnares attending a full and eaſie condition in the world. There are temptations ſuited to all conditions: thoſe that are poor and low in eſtate and reputation, are tempted to cozen, cheat, lie and flatter, and all to get up to the mount of Riches and honours: but thoſe that were born upon that mount, though they be more free from thoſe temptations, yet lie expoſed to others no leſs dangerous, and therefore we find, *not many mighty, not many noble are called*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. Many great and ſtately Ships, which ſpread much ſail, and draw much water periſh in the ſtorms, when ſmall Barks creep along the ſhore under the wind, and get ſafe into their Port. Never aim at an higher ſtation in this world than that you are in: (z) ſome have wiſht in their dying hour they had been lower, but no wiſe man ever wiſht himſelf at the top of honour at the brink of eternity.

z *Lugebat moribundus Hermannus plus temporis operaque ſe palatio quàm Templo impendiſſe; luxum & vitia Aulæ, quæ corrigere debuiſſet, adjuvaſſe, atque ita multo peccati dolore, trepidâ ſpe divinæ clementiæ, plurimo aſtantium horrore, anceps ſui, anima æternitatem ingreſſa eſt.* Hiſt. Bohem. lib. 11.

I will

I will conclude all with this hearty wish for you, that as God hath set you in a capacity of much service for him in your generation, so your hearts may be enlarged for God accordingly; that you may be very instrumental for his glory on earth, and may go safe, but late to Heaven. That the blessings of Heaven may be multiplied upon you both, and your hopeful springing branches; and that you may live to see your Childrens Children and peace upon *Israel*. In a word, that God will follow these truths in your hands with the blessing of his spirit, and that the manifold infirmities of him that ministers them, may be no prejudice or bar to their success with you or any into whose hands they shall come, which is the hearty desire of

Your most faithful friend and Servant in Christ,

Jo. Flavel.

THE

THE EPISTLE.

Christian Reader,

EVery Creature by the instinct of nature, or by the light of reason strives to avoid danger, and get out of harms way. The Cattel in the fields presaging a storm at hand, fly to the hedges and thickets for shelter. The Fowls of Heaven by the same natural instinct, perceiving the approach of Winter, take their timely flight to a warmer Climate. This * Naturalists have observed of them, and their observation is confirmed by Scripture testimony: of the Cattle it is said, Job 37. 6, 7, 8. He saith to the

* Plin. l. 18. c. 35. Virg. Georg. l. 1.

the Snow, be thou on the earth, likewiſe the ſmall rain, and the great rain of his ſtrength; then the beaſts go into dens and remain in their places: *And of the Fowls of the air it is ſaid, Jer.* 8. 7. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle and the Crane, and the Swallow obſerve the time of their coming.

But man being a prudent and proſpecting creature, hath the advantage of all other Creatures in his foreſeeing faculty; For God hath taught him more than the beaſts of the earth, and made him wiſer than the fowls of Heaven, *Job* 35. 11. And a wiſe mans heart diſcerneth both time and judgement, *Eccleſ.* 8. 5. *For as there are* natural ſigns *of the change of weather*, Mat. 16. 3. *ſo there are* moral ſigns *of the changes of time and providences*: *yet ſuch is the ſupineneſs and inexcuſable regardleſneſs of moſt men, that they will not* fear *till they* feel; *nor think any danger very* conſiderable, *till it become* inevitable.

We of this Nation *have long enjoyed the light of the glorious Goſpel among us: it hath ſhone in much clearneſs upon this ſinful* Iſland *for more than a whole* Century *of happy years: but the longeſt day hath an end, and we have cauſe to fear our bright Sun is going down upon us; for the ſhadows in* England *are grown greater than the ſubſtance*

which

which is one ſign of approaching night, Jer. 6. 4. *The beaſts of prey creep out of their dens and coverts, which is another ſign of night at hand*, Pſal. 104. 20. *and the workmen come home apace from their labours, and go to reſt; which is as ſad a ſign as any of the reſt*, Job 7. 1, 2. Iſa. 57. 1, 2. *Happy were it if in ſuch a juncture as this, every man would make it his work and buſineſs to ſecure himſelf in Chriſt, from the ſtorm of Gods indignation which is ready to fall upon theſe ſinful Nations. It is ſaid of the* Egyptians *when the ſtorm of hail was coming upon the land, Exod.* 9. 20. He that feared the word of the Lord, made his ſervants and cattle flee into the houſes. *'Tis but an odd ſight to ſee the prudence of an* Egyptian *out-vying the wiſdom and circumſpection of a* Chriſtian.

God who provides natural ſhelter and refuge for all creatures, hath not left his people unprovided and deſtitute of defence and ſecurity in the moſt tempeſtuous times of national judgements. It is ſaid, Mic. 5. 5. This man (*meaning the man Chriſt Jeſus*) ſhall be the peace, when the Aſſyrian ſhall come into our land, and when he ſhall tread in our Palaces: *and Iſai.* 26. 20. Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee; hide thy ſelf as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpaſt.

My Friends, let me ſpeak as freely *as I am ſure I ſpeak* ſeaſonably. *A ſound of judgement is in our ears;* the Lords voice crieth unto the City, and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy name: hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it, *Mica.* 6. 9. *All things round about us ſeem to poſture themſelves for trouble and diſtreſs. Where is the man of wiſdom that doth not foreſee a ſhower of wrath and indignation coming?* We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. Ask ye now and ſee whether a man doth travel with child? Wherefore do I ſee every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleneſs. Alas, for that day is great, ſo that none is like it; it is even the day of Jacobs trouble, but he ſhall be delivered out of it, *Jer.* 30.5,6,7.

Many eyes are now opened to ſee the common danger, but ſome foreſaw it long ago; when they ſaw the general decay of godlineſs every where, the notorious Prophanity *and* Atheiſm *that overſpread the Nations; the ſpirit of enmity and bitterneſs againſt the power of godlineſs whereever it appeared: and though there ſeemed to be a preſent calm and general quietneſs; yet thoſe that were wiſe in heart could not but diſcern diſtreſs of nations with great perplexity in theſe ſeeds of judgement and calamity: but as the* Epha *fills more and more, ſo*

the

the determined wrath grows more and more viſible to every eye: and 'tis a fond thing to dream of tranquillity *in the midſt of ſo much* iniquity. *Indeed, if theſe Nations were once ſwept with the beſom of* reformation, *we might hope God would not ſweep them with the beſome of* deſtruction: *but what peace can be* expected *whilſt the higheſt provocations are* continued?

It is therefore the great and preſent concernment of all to provide themſelves of a refuge before the ſtorm overtake them: for as Auguſtin *well obſerves,* non facile inveniuntur præſidia in adverſitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quæſita, *O take up your lodgings in the Attributes and Promiſes of God, before the night overtake you: view them often by faith, and clear up your intereſt in them, that you may be able to go to them in the dark, when the Miniſters and Ordinances of Chriſt have taken their leave of you, and bid you good night.*

Whilſt many are haſting on the wrath of God by prophaneneſs, and many by ſmiting their fellow Servants; and multitudes reſolve if trouble come, to fiſh in the troubled waters for ſafety and preferment; not doubting whenſoever the overflowing flood comes, but they ſhall ſtand dry: O that you would be mourning for their ſins, and providing better for your own ſafety.

Reader, it is thy one thing neceſſary *to get a cleared intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt: which being once obtained, thou maiſt face the ſtorm with boldneſs, and ſay Come troubles and diſtreſſes, loſſes and tryals, priſons and death; I am provided for you; do your worſt, you can do me no harm: let the winds roar, the lightnings fleſh, the rains and hail fall never ſo furiouſly, I have a good roof over my head, a comfortable lodging provided for me:* my place of defence is the munition of rocks, where bread ſhall be given me, and my waters ſhall be ſure, *Iſa.* 33. 16.

The deſign of the enſuing Treatiſe is to aſſiſt thee in this great work: and though it was promiſed to the world many years paſt, yet providence hath reſerved it for the fitteſt ſeaſon, and brought it to thy hand in a time of need.

It contains the method of grace in the application of the great redemption to the ſouls of men, *as the former part contains the method of grace in the* impetration *thereof by Jeſus Chriſt. The acceptation God hath given the former part, ſignified by the deſires of many for the publication of this; hath at laſt prevailed with me, (notwithſtanding the ſecret conſciouſneſs of my inequality to ſo great an undertakement) to adventure this* ſecond part *alſo upon the ingenuity and candour of the Reader.*

And

And I conſent the more willingly to the publication of this, becauſe the deſign I firſt aimed at could not be intire and compleat without it; but eſpecially the quality of the ſubject matter which through the bleſſing and concurrence of the ſpirit may be uſeful both to rouze the drouſie Conſciences of this ſleepy generation, and to aſſiſt the upright in clearing the work of the ſpirit upon their own ſouls. Theſe conſiderations have prevailed with me againſt all diſcouragements.

And now, **Reader**, *it is impoſſible for me to ſpeak particularly and diſtinctly to the caſe of thy ſoul, which I am ignorant of, except the Lord ſhall direct my diſcourſe to it in ſome of the following ſuppoſitions.*

If thou be one that haſt ſincerely **applied** *and received Jeſus Chriſt by faith, this diſcourſe through the bleſſing of the Spirit may be uſeful to thee, to clear and confirm thy evidences, to melt thy heart in the ſenſe of thy mercies, and to ingage and quicken thee in the way of thy duties. Here thou wilt ſee what great things the Lord hath done for thy ſoul, and how theſe dignities as thou art his Son or Daughter by the double title of* **regeneration** *and* **adoption**, *do oblige thee to yield up thy ſelf to God intirely, and to ſay from thy heart, Lord whatever I am, I am for thee, whatever I can do, I will do for thee, and whatever I can ſuffer, I will ſuffer for thee; and all that I*

am

am or have, all that I can do or ſuffer, is nothing to what thou haſt done for my ſoul.

If thou be a ſtranger to regeneration and faith; a perſon that makeſt a powerleſs profeſſion of Chriſt; that haſt a name to live but art dead: here it's poſſible thou maiſt meet ſomething that will convince thee, how dangerous a thing it is to be an old creature in the new creatures dreſs and habit: and what it is that blinds thy judgement, and is likelieſt to prove thy ruine: a ſeaſonable and full conviction whereof will be the greateſt mercy that can befall thee in this world; if thereby at laſt God may help thee to put on Chriſt as well as the name of Chriſt.

If thou be in darkneſs about the ſtate of thy own ſoul, and willing to have it faithfully and impartially tried by the rule of the word, which will not warp to any mans humour or intereſt: here thou wilt find ſome weak aſſiſtance offered thee, to clear and diſintangle thy doubting thoughts, which through thy prayer, and the ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, may lead thee to a comfortable ſettlement, and inward peace.

If thou be a proud, conceited, preſumptuous ſoul, who haſt too little knowledge, and too much pride and ſelf-love to admit any doubts or ſcruples of thy ſtate towards God; there are many things in this Treatiſe *proper for thy conviction and better information: for woe to thee, if thou ſhouldeſt not* fear, *till thou*

begin

begin to feel *thy miſery; if thy troubles do not* come on, *till all thy hopes are* gone off.

I know all theſe things are performed by me with much infirmity: and that the whole management is quite below the dignity of the ſubject. But when I conſider the ſucceſs of Sermons and Books in the world, hath but little relation to the elegancy of Language or accuracy of method; and that many may be uſeful, *who cannot be* excellent: *I am willing in all humility and ſincerity to commit it to the direction of providence, and the bleſſing of the Spirit.*

One thing I ſhall earneſtly requeſt of all the people of God, into whoſe hands this ſhall fall; that now at laſt, they will be perſwaded to end all their unbrotherly quarrels and ſtrifes among themſelves; which have waſted ſo much precious time, and decayed the vital ſpirits of Religion; hindred the converſion of multitudes, and increaſed and confirmed the Atheiſm of the times: and now at laſt opened a breach at which the common enemy is ready to enter, and end the quarrel to our coſt. O put on as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, and a ſpirit of charity and forbearance; if not for your own ſakes, yet for the Churches ſake; Si non vis tibi parcere, parce Carthagini.

I remember it is noted in our Engliſh Hiſtory *as a very remarkable thing, that when the* Severn *overflowed part of* Somerſetſhire, *it was obſerved that* Dogs *and* Hares, *Cats and Rats, to avoid the com-*

mon

mon destruction, would swim to the next rising ground, and abide quietly together in that common danger, without the least discovery of their natural antipathy.

The story applies it self, and O that Christians would every where depose their animosities; that the hearts of the Fathers might be turned to the children, and the children to the Fathers; lest God come and smite the earth with a curse.

O that you would dwell more in your Closets, and be more frequently and fervently upon your knees. O that you would search your hearts more narrowly, and sift them more throughly than ever; before the day pass as the chaff, and the Lords fierce anger come upon you: look into your Bibles, *then into your* hearts, *and then to* Heaven *for a true discovery of your conditions; and if this poor mite may contribute any thing to that end, it will be a great reward of the unworthy labours of*

Thy Servant in Christ,

John Flavel.



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Reader,

Reader,

NOtwithstanding the extraordinary care of the Printer and Corrector some faults have escaped the Press, which a little care of thine may easily rectifie in this manner.

CORRIGENDA.

PAge 12. line 4. add *be* before *registred:* p. 27. l. 8. read *though:* p. 31. l. 9. for *it* r. *him:* p. 36. l. 20. add *by nature:* p. 47. l. 31. for *when* r. *whence:* p. 38. l. 22. dele *And:* p. 71. l. 22. dele *either*, and l. 23. for *or* r. *this:* p. 74. l. 7. for *of* r. *or:* p. 81. l. penult. *is* is transposed: p. 88. l. 3. for *contain* r. *continue:* p. 117. l. 22. dele *of* and put it after *actings:* p. 167. l. ult. add *to justifie us* after *as Christ hath:* p. 244. l. 26. for *seems* r. *sees:* p. 158. l. 27. for *of* r. *by;* p. 300. l. 9. for *essentially* r. *especially:* p. 307. l. 38. for *by* r. *of salvation:* p. 422. l. 2. dele *not:* p. 323. l. 28. for *are* r. *is:* p. 454. l. 9. for *creature* r. *nature:* p. 475. l. 6. dele *The earthliness of:* p. 487. l. 4. for *our* r. *one:* p. 519. l. 19. for *weaken* r. *meeken:* p. 507. l. 28. for *as* r. *was:* p. 536. l. 12. for *spiritual* r. *specifical:* p. 541. l. 23. for *or* r. *and:* p. 549. l. penult. for *your* r. *you:* p. 558. l. 27. for *us* r. *him.*

Redemption hath 2 Parts, *viz.* meritorious *Impetration*, opened Part 1. and effectual *Application* opened in this 2d Part: wherein it is considered and improved,

- 1. Doctrinally both in its
  - 1. General nature opened, *Sermon* 1.
  - 2. Special nature consisting in our
    - 1. Union with Christ, *Serm.* 2. including four things in it, *viz.*
      - 1. The Gospel offer. *Serm.* 3
      - 2. The Spirits drawing. *Serm.* 4
      - 3. Infusion of Life. *Serm.* 5
      - 4. Actual Faith. *Serm.* 6,7
    - 2. Communion with Christ in graces and Priviledges *Serm.* 8
- 2. Practically in 4. Uses.
  - 1. Exhortation to come to Christ, *Serm.* 9. enforced by motives drawn from his
    - 1. Encouraging Titles which are six.
      - 1. Title. *Serm.* 10
      - 2. Title. *Serm.* 11
      - 3. Title. *Serm.* 12
      - 4. Title. *Serm.* 13
      - 5. Title. *Serm.* 14
      - 6. Title. *Serm.* 15
    - 2. Excellent priviledges which are four.
      - 1. Priviledge. *Serm.* 16
      - 2. Priviledge. *Serm.* 17
      - 3. Priviledge. *Serm.* 18
      - 4. Priviledge. *Serm.* 19
  - 2. Conviction proving that none can ordinarily come to Christ without
    - 1. The application of the Law. *Serm.* 20, 21
    - 2. The teachings of the Father. *Serm.* 22, 23
  - 3. Examination of our interest in Christ by four Trials, *viz.*
    - 1. The donation of the spirit. *Serm.* 24
    - 2. The new Creation. *Serm.* 25, 26
    - 3. The mortification of sin. *Serm.* 27, 28
    - 4. The imitation of Christ. *Serm.* 29, 30
  - 4. Lamentation representing the misery of Christless persons as they lie under, and are exposed to
    - 1. The Death of sin. *Serm.* 31
    - 2. The curse of the Law. *Serm.* 32
    - 3. Greater guilt and damnation. *Serm.* 33

(4.) And in order thereunto they are blinded by the God of this world, which forerunner of Damnation is open'd and applied in Serm. 34,35.

The

The First SERMON.

Serm. 1.

---

1 Cor. 1. 30.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdome, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Opening the general nature of Effectual Application.

HE that enquires what is the just value and worth of Christ, asks a question which puts all the men on earth, and Angels in heaven to an everlasting non-plus.

The highest attainment of our knowledge in this life, is to know that himself and his love do pass knowledge, *Eph.* 3. 19.

But how excellent soever Christ is in himself, what treasures of righteousness soever lye in his blood, and whatever joy, peace, and ravishing comforts spring up to men out of

his *incarnation*, *humiliation*, and *exaltation*; they all give down their distinct benefits and comforts to them in the way of *Effectual application*.

For never was any wound healed by a prepared, but unapplied plaister. Never any body warmed by the most costly garment made, but not put on: Never any heart refreshed and comforted by the richest Cordial compounded, but not received: not from the beginning of the world was it ever known, that a poor *deceived*, *condemned*, *polluted* miserable sinner was actually delivered out of that woful state, until of God Christ was made unto him, wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

For look * as the Condemnation of the *First Adam* passeth not to us, except (as by generation) we are his; so grace and remission pass not from the *Second Adam* to us, except as (by regeneration) we are his. *Adam's* Sin hurts none but those that are in him; and Christs blood profits none but those that are in him: how great a weight therefore doth there hang upon the effectual application of Christ to the Souls of men! and what is there in the whole world so awfully solemn, so greatly important as this is! Such is the strong consolation resulting from it, that the Apostle in this context offers it to the believing *Corinthians*, as a superabundant recompence for the despicable meanness and baseness of their outward condition in this world, of which he had just before spoken in *ver.* 27, 28. telling them though the world contemned them as vile, foolish, and weak, yet *of God Christ is made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*

* Parisiensis de causis, cur deus homo, cap. 9. *Quemadmodum non transit Adæ damnatio, nisi per generationem in carnaliter ex eo generatos: Sic non transit Christi gratia, & peccatorum remissio, nisi per regenerationem ad spiritualiter per ipsum regeneratos. Sicut delictum Adæ non nocet, nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt: Sic nec gratia Christi prodest, nisi suis, in eo quod sui sunt.*

In which words we have an *Enumeration* of the chief priviledges of believers, and *an Account* of the method whereby they come to be invested with them.

1. *Quatuor Christo elogia hic adscribit, quæ totam ejus virtutem, & quicquid ab ipso bonorum recipimus complectuntur.* Calv. in loc.

First, Their priviledges are enumerated, namely, *wisdome*, *righteousness*, *sanctification*, and *redemption*, mercies of inestimable value in themselves; and such as respect a four-

fold

fold misery lying upon soul man: *viz.* *Ignorance, guilt, pollution*, and the whole train of miserable consequences and effects let in upon the nature of men, yea the best and holiest of men by sin.

Lapsed man is not only in deep misery, but grossly ignorant both that he is so, and how to recover himself from it: Sin hath left him at once senseless of his state, and at a perfect loss about the true remedy.

To cure this, Christ is made to him *Wisdome*, not only by *improvement* of those treasures of wisdome that are in himself for the benefit of such souls as are united to him, as an head consulting the good of his own members; but also by *imparting* his wisdome to them by the Spirit of illumination, whereby they come to discern both their sin and danger; as also the true way of their recovery from both, through the application of Christ to their souls by faith.

But alas! Simple illumination doth but increase our burden, and exasperate our misery, as long as sin in the guilt of it is either imputed to our persons unto condemnation, or reflected by our consciences in a way of accusation.

With design therefore to remedy and heal this sore evil, *Christ* is made of God unto us *righteousness*, compleat and perfect righteousness, whereby our obligation to punishment is dissolved, and thereby a solid foundation for a well settled peace of conscience firmly established.

Yea, but although the removing of guilt from our persons and consciences be an inestimable mercy, yet alone it cannot make us compleatly happy: for though a man should never be damned for sin, yet what is it less than an hell upon earth to be under the dominion and pollution of every base lust? it's misery enough to be daily defiled by sin, though a man should never be damned for it.

To compleat therefore the happiness of the redeemed; Christ is not only made of God unto them *Wisdome*, and *righteousness*, the one curing our ignorance, the other our guilt; but he is made *Sanctification* also, to relieve us against the dominion and pollution of our corruptions: *he comes both by water and by blood, not by blood only, but by water also*: 1 *Joh.* 5. 6. *purging* as well as *pardoning*: how compleat and perfect a cure is Christ!

But yet ſomething is required beyond all this to make our happineſs perfect and entire wanting nothing; and that is the removal of thoſe doleful effects and conſequents of ſin, which notwithſtanding all the forementioned priviledges and mercies ſtill lye upon the ſouls and bodies of illuminated, juſtified and ſanctified perſons. For even upon the beſt and holieſt of men, what ſwarms of vanity, loads of deadneſs, and fits of unbelief do daily appear in and oppreſs their ſouls! to the imbittering of all the comforts of life to them. And how many diſeaſes, deformities, pains oppreſs their bodies, which daily moulders away by them, till they fall into the grave by death, even as the bodies of other men do, who never received ſuch priviledges from Chriſt as they do. For if *Chriſt be in us* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks *Rom.* 8. 10.) *the body is dead becauſe of ſin*: Sanctification exempts us not from mortality.

But from all theſe and whatſoever elſe the fruits and conſequences of ſin, Chriſt is *Redemption* to his people alſo: this ſeals up the ſum of mercies: this ſo compleats the happineſs of the Saints that it leaves nothing to deſire.

Theſe four, wiſdome, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption take up amongſt them all that is neceſſary or deſirable to make a ſoul truly and perfectly bleſſed.

2. Secondly, we have here the method and way by which the Elect come to be inveſted with theſe excellent priviledges: the account whereof the Apoſtle gives us in theſe words [*Who of God is made unto us*] in which expreſſion four things are remarkable.

Firſt, That Chriſt and his benefits go inſeparably and undividedly together: 'tis Chriſt himſelf is made all this unto us: we can have no ſaving benefit ſeparate and apart from the perſon of Chriſt: many would willingly receive his *priviledges*, who will not receive his perſon; but it cannot be; if we will have one, we muſt take the other too: yea, we muſt accept his perſon firſt and then his benefits: as it is in the marriage Covenant, ſo 'tis here.

Secondly, That Chriſt with his benefits muſt be perſonally and particularly applied to us before we can receive any actual ſaving priviledge by him: he muſt be [*made unto us*] (*i.e.*) particularly applied to us: as a ſum of money becomes or is made the ranſome and liberty of a Captive when it is not only promiſed

ſed but paid down in his name, and legally applied for that uſe and end: when Chriſt dyed, the ranſome was prepared, the ſum laid down; but yet the elect continue ſtill in ſin and miſery notwithſtanding, till by *effectual calling* it be actually *applied* to their perſons, and then they are made free, *Rom.* 5. 10, 11. reconciled by Chriſts death by whom *we have now received the atonement.*

Thirdly, That this application of Chriſt is the work of God, and not of man: *Of God he is made unto us*: the ſame hand that prepared it, muſt alſo apply it, or elſe we periſh notwithſtanding all that the father hath done in contriving and appointing, and all that the ſon hath done in executing and accompliſhing the deſign thus far. And this actual application is the work of the Spirit by a ſingular appropriation.

Fourthly and Laſtly, This expreſſion imports the ſuitableneſs of Chriſt to the neceſſities of Sinners: What they want, he is made to them: and indeed as money anſwers all things, and is convertible into meat, drink, rayment, phyſick, or what elſe our bodily neceſſities do require; ſo *Chriſt* is virtually and eminently all that the neceſſities of our ſouls require: bread to the hungry ſoul, and cloathing to the naked ſoul. In a word, God prepared and furniſhed him on purpoſe to anſwer all our wants, which fully hits the Apoſtles ſenſe, when he ſaith, *Who of God is made unto us wiſdome and righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption.* The ſum of all is

Doct. *Doct.*

That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with all his precious benefits becomes ours by Gods ſpecial and effectual Application.

There is a twofold Application of our redemption, one *Primary*, the other *Secondary*: the former is the Act of God the *Father*, applying it to Chriſt our Surety, and virtually to us in him; the later is the Act of the holy *Spirit*, perſonally and actually applying it to us in the work of converſion: the former hath the reſpect and relation of an example, model, or pattern to this, and this is produced and wrought by the vertue of that. What was done upon the perſon of Chriſt, was not only virtually done upon us, conſidered in him as a common

common publick repreſentative perſon, in which ſenſe we are ſaid to dye with him and live with him, to be crucified with him and buryed with him: but it was alſo intended for a platform or Idea of what is to be done by the Spirit actually upon our ſouls and bodies in our ſingle perſons. As he dyed for ſin, ſo the Spirit applying his death to us in the work of *mortification* cauſes us to dye to ſin, by the vertue of his death: and as he was quickned by the Spirit and raiſed unto life, ſo the Spirit applying unto us the life of Chriſt cauſeth us to live, by ſpiritual *vivification*. Now this perſonal, ſecondary and *actual application of redemption* to us by the Spirit in his ſanctifying work is that which I am engaged here to diſcuſs and open: Which I ſhall do in theſe following Propoſitions.

Propoſ. 1.

Propoſ. 1. *The Application of Chriſt to us is not only Comprehenſive of our Juſtification, but of all thoſe works of the Spirit which are known to us in Scripture by the names of regeneration, vocation, ſanctification and converſion.*

Though all theſe terms have ſome ſmall reſpective differences among themſelves; yet they are all included in this general, the *applying*, and *putting* on of Chriſt, *Rom.* 13. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Regeneration expreſſes thoſe ſupernatural, divine, new qualities infuſed by the Spirit into the Soul, which are the principles of all holy actions.

Vocation expreſſeth the terms from which, and to which the ſoul moves, when the Spirit works ſavingly upon it under the Goſpel call.

Sanctification notes that holy dedication of heart and life to God: our becoming the Temples of the living God, ſeparate from all prophane, ſinful practices, to the Lords only uſe and ſervice.

Converſion denotes the great change it ſelf which the Spirit cauſeth upon the ſoul, turning it by a ſweet irreſiſtible efficacy from the power of Sin and Satan to God in Chriſt.

Now all theſe are imported in, and done by the *Application of Chriſt to our ſouls*: for when once the efficacy of Chriſts death

death and the vertue of his reſurrection come to take place upon the heart of any man, he cannot but turn from Sin to God, and become a new creature, living and acting by new principles and rules. So the Apoſtle obſerves 1 *Theſ.* 1. 5,6. ſpeaking of the effect of this work of the Spirit upon that people, *Our Goſpel* (ſaith he) *came not to you in word only, but in power; and in the Holy Ghoſt*: there was the effectual application of Chriſt to them. *And you became followers of us and of the Lord, ver.* 6. there was their effectual call. *And ye turned from dumb Idols to ſerve the living and true God, ver.* 9. there was their converſion. *So that ye were enſamples to all that believe, ver.* 7. there was their life of Sanctification or dedication to God. So that all theſe are comprehended in effectual application.

Propoſ. 2.

The Application of Chriſt to the ſouls of men is that great project and deſign of God in this world, for the accompliſhment whereof all the Ordinances and all the officers of the Goſpel are appointed and continued in the world. Propoſ. 2.

This the Goſpel expreſsly declared to be its direct and great end, and the great buſineſs of all its officers, *Eph.* 4. 11,12. *And he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and teachers: till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God; to a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt*, (i. e.) the great aim and ſcope of all Chriſts Ordinances and officers is to bring men into Union with Chriſt, and ſo build them up to perfection in him: or to unite them to, and confirm them in Chriſt: and when it ſhall have finiſhed this deſign, then ſhall the whole frame of Goſpel Ordinances be taken down, and all its officers disbanded. *The Kingdom* (i. e. this preſent œconomy, manner and form of Government) *ſhall be delivered up*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. what are Miniſters, but the Bridegrooms friends, Ambaſſadors for God to beſeech men to be reconciled? when therefore all the elect are brought home in a reconciled ſtate to Chriſt, when the marriage of the Lamb is come, our work and office expire together.

Propoſ. 3.

Propoſ. 3.

Propoſ. 3. *Such is the Importance and great concernment of the perſonal application of Chriſt to us by the Spirit, that whatſoever the father hath done in the contrivement, or the Son hath done in the accompliſhment of our Redemption, is all inavailable and ineffectual to our Salvation without this.*

It is confeſſedly true, that Gods good pleaſure appointing us from eternity to Salvation, is in its kind a moſt full and ſufficient *Impulſive* cauſe of our Salvation, and every way able (for ſo much as it is concerned) to produce its effect. And Chriſts humiliation and ſufferings are a moſt compleat and ſufficient *meritorious* cauſe of our Salvation, to which nothing can be added to make it more apt and able to procure our Salvation, than it already is: yet neither the one or other can actually ſave any Soul without the *Spirits application* of Chriſt to it: for where there are divers *ſocial cauſes* or *concauſes* neceſſary to produce one effect; there the effect cannot be produced until the laſt cauſe have wrought: thus it is here, The *Father* hath elected, and the *Son* hath redeemed; but until the *Spirit* (who is the laſt cauſe) have wrought his part alſo, we cannot be ſaved. For he comes in the Fathers and in the Sons name and authority to put the laſt hand to our Salvation work, by bringing all the fruits of election and redemption home to our ſouls in this work of effectual vocation: hence the Apoſtle 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. noting the order of cauſes in their operations, for the bringing about of our Salvation, thus ſtates it: *Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt*: here you find Gods election and Chriſts blood, the two great cauſes of Salvation, and yet neither of theſe alone, nor both together can ſave us; there muſt be added the Sanctification of the Spirit, by which Gods decree is executed; and the ſprinkling (*i. e.* the perſonal *application* of Chriſts blood) as well as the ſhedding of it, before we can have the ſaving benefit of either of the former cauſes.

Propoſ. 4.

Propoſ. 4.

The application of Chriſt with his ſaving benefits, is exactly of the ſame extent and latitude with the Fathers election, and the Sons intention in dying, and cannot poſſibly be extended to one ſoul farther. Propoſ. 4.

Whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called, Rom. 8. 30. And *Acts* 13. 48. *as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*; 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *who hath ſaved and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpoſe and grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus before the foundation of the world.*

The Father, Son and Spirit (betwixt whom was the council of peace) work out their deſign in a perfect harmony and conſent: as there was no jarr in their council, ſo there can be none in the execution of it: thoſe whom the Father before all time did chuſe; they, and they only are the perſons whom the Son when the fulneſs of time for the execution of that decree was come, dyed for, *John* 17. 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me*: and *ver.* 19. *for their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf*: (*i.e.*) conſecrate, devote, or ſet my ſelf apart for a ſacrifice for them. And thoſe for whom Chriſt died, are the perſons to whom the Spirit effectually applys the benefits and purchaſes of his blood: he comes in the name of the Father and Son; *but the world cannot receive him, for it neither ſees, nor knows him, Joh.* 14. 17. *they that are not of Chriſts ſheep, believe not, Joh.* 10. 26.

Chriſt hath indeed a fulneſs of ſaving power, but the diſpenſation thereof is limited by the Fathers will: therefore he tells us, *Matth.* 20. 23. *it is not mine to give, but it ſhall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my father*: in which words he no way denies his authority to give glory as well as grace; only ſhews that in the diſpenſation proper to him as mediator, he was limited by his Fathers will and counſel.

And thus alſo are the diſpenſations of grace by the Spirit in like manner limited, both by the counſel and will of the Father and Son. For as he proceeds from them, ſo he acts in the adminiſtration proper to him, by commiſſion from both.

Joh. 14. 26. *The Holy Ghoſt whom the Father will ſend in my name:* and as he comes forth into the world by this joynt Commiſſion, ſo his diſpenſations are limited in his Commiſſion: for it's ſaid *John* 16. 13. *he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf, but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak:* (*i. e.*) he ſhall in all things act according to his Commiſſion which the Father and I have given him.

The Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do, *Joh.* 5. 19. And the Spirit can do nothing of himſelf, but what he hears from the Father and Son: and it's impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe, conſidering not only the Unity of their Nature, but alſo of their will and deſign. So that you ſee the applications of Chriſt and benefits by the Spirit are commenſurable with the Fathers ſecret counſel, and the Sons deſign in dying, which are the rule, model and pattern of the Spirits working.

Propoſ. 5.

Propoſ. 5. *The Application of Chriſt to Souls by the regenerating work of the Spirit is that which makes the firſt internal difference and diſtinction among men.*

It is very true, that in reſpect of Gods fore-knowledge and purpoſe there was a diſtinction betwixt one man and another, before any man had a being, one was taken, another left: and with reſpect to the death of Chriſt, there is a great difference betwixt one and another: he laid down his life for the ſheep, he pray'd for them and not for the world; but all this while as to any *relative change* of ſtate, or *real change* of temper, they are upon a level with the reſt of the miſerable world. The Elect themſelves are *by nature children of wrath even as others*, *Eph.* 2. 3. and to the ſame purpoſe the Apoſtle tells the *Corinthians* 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. (when he had given in that black bill deſcribing the moſt lewd profligate abominable wretches in the world, men whoſe practices did ſtink in the very noſtrils of nature, and were able to make the more ſober Heathens bluſh; after this he tells the *Corinthians*) *And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed*, &c. *q. d.* look, theſe were your Companions once: as they are, you lately were.

The

The work of the Spirit doth not only evidence and manifeſt that difference which Gods Election hath made between man and man, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4, 5. but it alſo makes a twofold difference it ſelf, namely in *ſtate* and *temper*; whereby they viſibly differ not only from other men, but alſo from themſelves: after this work, though a man be the *who*, yet not the *what* he was. This work of the ſpirit makes us new creatures, namely for quality and temper: 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new.*

Propoſ. 6.

The Application of Chriſt by the work of regeneration is that which yields unto men all the ſenſible ſweetneſs and refreſhing comforts that they have in Chriſt, and in all that he hath done, ſuffered, or purchaſed for ſinners. *Propoſ.* 6.

An unſanctified perſon may reliſh the natural ſweetneſs of the creature, as well as he that is ſanctified; he may alſo ſeem to reliſh and taſt ſome ſweetneſs in the delicious promiſes and diſcoveries of the Goſpel by a *miſapplication* of them to himſelf: but this is like the joy of a beggar dreaming he is a King; but he awakes and finds himſelf a beggar ſtill: but for the rational, ſolid and genuine delights and comforts of religion, no man taſts it, till this work of the Spirit have firſt paſt upon his ſoul: it is an encloſed pleaſure, a ſtranger intermeddles not with it. *The white ſtone and the new name*, (denoting the pleaſant reſults and fruits of Juſtification and adoption) *no man knows but he that receives it*, *Revel.* 2. 7. there are all thoſe things wanting in the unſanctified (though Elect) ſoul that ſhould capacitate and enable it to reliſh the ſweetneſs of Chriſt and Religion, namely, *propriety*, *evidence*, and ſuitableneſs of Spirit.

Propriety is the ſweeteſt part of any excellency, therefore *Luther* was wont to ſay, that the ſweetneſs of the Goſpel lay moſtly in *pronouns*, as *me*, *my*, *thy*, &c. who loved [me] and gave himſelf for me, *Gal.* 2. 20. Chriſt Jeſus [my] Lord, *Phil.* 3. 18. ſo *Matth.* 9. 2. *Son be of good cheer* [thy] *ſins are forgiven*: take away propriety and you deflower the very Goſpel of its beauty and deliciouſneſs: and as propriety, ſo

Evidence is requiſite to joy and comfort, yea, ſo neceſſary, that even intereſt and propriety afford no ſenſible ſweetneſs without it. For as to comfort, it's all one not to appear, and not to be. If I am regiſtred in the book of life, and know it not; what comfort can my name there afford me? beſides, to capacitate a ſoul for the ſweetneſs and comfort of *Chriſt*, there is alſo *an agreeable temper* of Spirit required; for how can *Chriſt* be ſweet to that mans ſoul, whoſe thoughts reluctate, decline, or nauſeate ſo holy and pure an object? Now, all theſe requiſites being the proper effects and fruits of the Spirits ſanctifying operations upon us, it is beyond controverſie that the conſolations of Chriſt cannot be taſted, until the application of Chriſt be firſt made.

Propoſ. 7.

Propoſ. 7. *The Application of Chriſt to the ſoul effectually, though it be ſo far wrought in the firſt ſaving work of the Spirit, as truly to entitle the ſoul to Chriſt, and ſave it from the danger of periſhing; yet is it a work gradually advancing in the believers ſoul, whilſt it abides on this ſide heaven and glory.*

Nullos propriè dictos gradus admittit, ſed unico actu ſimul ac ſemel exiſtit perfecta, quamvis quoad manifeſtationem, ſenſum, & effecta; varios habet gradus. Ames.

It's true indeed, that Chriſt is perfectly and compleatly apply'd to the ſoul in the firſt act for righteouſneſs. Juſtification being a relative change properly admits no degrees, but is perfected together and at once, in one only act; though as to its manifeſtation and ſenſe it hath various degrees: but the *application* of Chriſt to us for wiſdome and ſanctification is not perfected in one ſingle act, but riſes by many and ſlow degrees to its juſt perfection.

And though we are truly ſaid to be come to Chriſt when we firſt believe, *Joh.* 6. 35. yet the ſoul after that is ſtill coming to him by farther acts of faith: 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. *to whom* [coming] *as unto a living ſtone*: the *participle* notes a continued motion, by which the ſoul gains ground, and ſtill gets nearer and nearer to Chriſt: growing ſtill more inwardly acquainted with him, the knowledge of Chriſt grows upon the ſoul as the morning light, from its firſt ſpring, to the perfect day: *Prov.* 4. 18. every grace of the Spirit grows, if not ſenſibly, yet really, for it is in diſcerning the growth of Sanctification, as it is in diſcerning the growth of plants; which we perceive rather

rather *crēviſſe, quàm creſcere*; to have grown, than to grow. And as it thrives in the ſoul, by deeper radications of the habits, and more promptitude and ſpirituality in the actings; ſo Chriſt and the Soul proportionably cloſe more and more inwardly and efficaciouſly, till at laſt it be wholly ſwallow'd up in Chriſts full and perfect enjoyment.

Propoſ. 8.

Laſtly, *Although the ſeveral priviledges and benefits forementioned be all truly and really beſtowed with Chriſt upon believers, yet they are not communicated to them in one and the ſame way and manner; but differently and diverſly, as their particular and reſpective natures do require.* *Propoſ.* 8.

Theſe four illuſtrious benefits are convey'd from Chriſt to us in three different ways and methods: his righteouſneſs is made ours by *imputation*: his wiſdome and ſanctification by *renovation*: his redemption, by our *glorification*.

I know the Communication of Chriſts righteouſneſs to us by imputation, is not only denyed, but * ſcoffed at by *Papiſts*; who own no righteouſneſs, but what is (at leaſt) confounded with that which is inherent in us: and for *imputative* (blaſphemouſly ſtiled by them *putative*) righteouſneſs; they flatly deny it; and look upon it as a moſt abſurd doctrine, every where endeavouring to load it with theſe and ſuch like abſurdities. That if God impute Chriſts righteouſneſs to the believer, and accepts what Chriſt hath performed for him; as if he had performed it himſelf: then, we may be accounted as righteous as Chriſt. Then we may be the Redeemers of the world. Falſe and groundleſs conſequences: as if a man ſhould ſay, my debt is paid by my ſurety, therefore I am as rich as he: when we ſay the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is made ours by *imputation*, we think not it's made ours according to its univerſal value, but according to our particular neceſſity: not to make others righteous, but to make us ſo: not that we have the formal intrinſecal righteouſneſs of Chriſt in us, as it is in him; but a relative righteouſneſs, which makes us righteous even as he is righteous, not as to the quantity but as to the truth of it: nor is it imputed to us, as though Chriſt deſigned to make us the

Spectrum cretebri Lutheranis Stapleton.

1 Joh. 3. 7.

the *causes* of Salvation to others, but the *Subjects* of Salvation our ſelves; it is *inheſively* in him, *communicatively* it becomes ours: by imputation the ſin of the firſt *Adam* became ours, and the ſame way the righteouſneſs of the ſecond *Adam* becomes ours: *Rom.* 5. 17. This way the *Redeemer* becam e ſin for us, and this way we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. This way *Abraham* the Father of believers was juſtified, therefore this way all believers, the children of *Abraham* muſt be juſtified alſo, *Rom.* 4. 22, 23. And thus is Chriſts righteouſneſs made ours.

Non formali & intrinſeca juſtitiâ, ſed relativâ: non quoad quantitatem, ſed veritatem: ſit enim finita applicatio infinitæ juſtitiæ; ſi aliter, eque juſti eſſemus ut Chriſtus, at non: juſtitia Chriſti ſit noſtra, non quoad univerſalem valorem, ſed particularem neceſſitatem; & imputatur nobis, non ut cauſis ſalvationis, ſed ut ſubjectis ſalvandis. Bradſh. de Juſtificat.

But in conveying and communicating his *wiſdome* and *Sanctification* he takes another method, for this is not *imputed*, but really *imparted* to us, by the illuminating, and regenerating work of the Spirit: theſe are graces really inherent in us: our righteouſneſs comes from Chriſt as a *Surety*, but our holineſs comes from him as a quickening *head*, ſending vital influences into all his members.

Now theſe gracious habits being ſubjected and ſeated in the ſouls of poor imperfect creatures, whoſe corruptions abide and work in the very ſame faculties where grace hath its reſidence, it cannot be, that our Sanctification ſhould be ſo perfect and compleat, as our Juſtification is, which inheres only in Chriſt. See *Gal.* 5. 17. thus are righteouſneſs and ſanctification communicated and made ours: but then

For *Redemption*, that is to ſay, abſolute and plenary deliverance from all the ſad remains, effects and conſequents of Sin, both upon ſoul and body: this is made ours (or to keep to the terms) *Chriſt is made redemption to us, by glorification*: then and not before are theſe miſerable effects removed: we put off theſe together with the body. So that look as *Juſtification* cures the *guilt* of Sin, and *Sanctification* the *dominion* and power of Sin: ſo *glorification* removes together with its *exiſtence* and being, all thoſe *miſeries* which it let in (as at a floodgate) upon our whole man. *Eph.* 5. 26, 27.

And

And thus of God Chriſt is made unto us wiſdome and righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption: namely by imputation, regeneration, and glorification.

I ſhall next improve the point in ſome uſeful Inferences.

Inference 1.

Learn from hence what a naked, deſtitute and empty thing a poor ſinner is in his natural and unregenerate ſtate. *Infer.* 1.

He is one that naturally and inherently hath neither wiſdome, nor righteouſneſs, ſanctification nor redemption: all theſe muſt come from without himſelf, even from Chriſt; who is made all this to a ſinner, or elſe he muſt eternally periſh.

As no creature (in reſpect of external abilities) comes under more natural weakneſs into the world than man, naked and empty, and more ſhiftleſs and helpleſs than any other creature; ſo it is with his ſoul, yea, much more than ſo: all our excellencies are borrowed excellencies, no reaſon therefore to be proud of any of them: 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *What haſt thou, that thou haſt not received? now if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not received it?* q. d. what intolerable inſolence, and vanity would it be for a man that wears the rich and coſtly robe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, in which there is not one thred of his own ſpinning; but all made by *free grace*, and not by *free will*; to jett proudly up and down the world in it, as if himſelf had made it; and he were beholding to none for it? O man! thine excellencies whatever they are, are borrowed from Chriſt, they oblige thee to him, but he can be no more obliged to thee who weareſt them, than the Sun is obliged to him that borrows its light, or the fountain to him that draws its water for his uſe and benefit.

Quin dicitur eum factum eſſe nobis ſapientiam, juſtitiam, ſanctitatem & redemptionem, rurſus & noſtra dignitas & meritum excluduntur: ex hoc etiam conſequitur, ante perceptionem ejus, nos fuiſſe ſtultos, injuſtos, profanos & diaboli mancipia. Muſculus in loc.

And it hath ever been the care of holy men, when they have viewed their own gracious *principles*, or beſt *performances*; ſtill to diſclaim themſelves, and own free grace as the ſole author of all. Thus holy *Paul* viewing the principles of divine life in himſelf, (the richeſt gift beſtowed upon man in this world by Jeſus Chriſt,) how doth he renounce himſelf, and deny the leaſt part of the praiſe and glory as belonging to him, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Now I live, yet not I; but Chriſt liveth in me:*

and

and ſo for the beſt *duties* that ever he performed for God (and what meer man ever did more for God?) yet when in a juſt and neceſſary defence he was conſtrain'd to mention them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. how carefully is the like [*Yet not I*] preſently added? *I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I; but the grace of God which was with me.*

Well then, let the ſenſe of your own emptineſs by nature humble and oblige you the more to Chriſt from whom you receive all you have.

Inference 2.

Infer. 2. *Hence again we are informed, that none can claim benefit by imputed righteouſneſs, but thoſe only that live in the power of inherent holineſs: to whomſoever Chriſt is made righteouſneſs, to him he is alſo made ſanctification.*

The Goſpel hath not the leaſt favour for licentiouſneſs: it is every way as careful to preſs men to their duties, as to inſtruct them in their priviledges, *Titus* 3. 8. *This is a faithful ſaying; and theſe things I will that thou affirm conſtantly; That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works:* It is a looſe principle, divulged by *Libertines* to the reproach of Chriſt and his Goſpel, that ſanctification is not the evidence of our juſtification: and Chriſt is as much wronged by them who ſeparate holineſs from righteouſneſs (as if a ſenſual vile life were conſiſtent with a juſtified ſtate) as he is in the contrary extream by thoſe who confound Chriſts righteouſneſs with mans holineſs, in the point of Juſtification: or that own no other righteouſneſs but what is inherent in themſelves: the former opinion makes him a *cloak* for ſin, the later a *needleſs ſacrifice* for ſin.

It's true, our Sanctification can't juſtifie us before God, but what then, can't it evidence our Juſtification before men? is there no neceſſity or uſe for holineſs, becauſe it hath no hand in our Juſtification? is the preparation of the ſoul for heaven, by altering its frame and temper, nothing? is the glorifying of our Redeemer by the exerciſes of grace in this world nothing? doth the work of Chriſt render the work of the Spirit needleſs? God forbid: *he came not by blood only, but by water alſo,* 1 *Joh.* 5. 6. And when the Apoſtle ſaith

faith in *Rom.* 4. 5. *but unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly; his faith is counted for righteouſneſs*: the ſcope of it is neither to characterize and deſcribe the juſtified perſon, as one that is lazy and ſlothful and hath no mind to work, or rebellious and refractory, refuſing obedience to the commands of God; but to repreſent him as an humbled ſinner, who is convinced of his inability to work out his own righteouſneſs by the Law, and ſees all his endeavours to obey the Law fall ſhort of righteouſneſs, and therefore is ſaid in a Law ſenſe *not to work*, becauſe he doth not work ſo as to anſwer the purpoſe and end of the Law, which accepts of nothing beneath perfect obedience.

And when (in the ſame Text) the ungodly are ſaid to be juſtified, that character deſcribes not the temper and frame of their hearts and lives after their juſtification, but what it was before, not as it leaves, but as it found them.

Deus juſtificat impium antecedenter, non conſequenter. Pareus.

Infer. 3.

How unreaſonable and worſe than bruitiſh is the ſin of infidelity by which the Sinner rejects Chriſt, and with him all thoſe mercies and benefits which alone can relieve and cure his miſery! *Infer.* 3.

He is by nature blind and ignorant, and yet refuſes Chriſt, who comes to him with heavenly light and wiſdome: he is condemned by the terrible ſentence of the Law to eternal wrath, and yet rejects Chriſt who tenders to him compleat and perfect righteouſneſs: he is wholly polluted and plunged into original and actual pollutions of nature and practice, yet will have none of Chriſt, who would become ſanctification to him: he is oppreſſed in ſoul and body with the deplorable effects and miſeries ſin hath brought upon him, and yet is ſo in love with his bondage that he will neither accept Chriſt, nor the redemption he brings with him to ſinners.

Oh what monſters! what beaſts hath ſin turned its ſubjects into! *you will not come unto me that you may have life*, *Joh.* 5. 40. ſin hath ſtabb'd the ſinner to the heart, the wounds are all mortal, eternal death is in his face; Chriſt hath prepared the only plaiſter that can cure his wounds, but he will not ſuffer him to apply it: he acts like one in love with death, and that judges it ſweet to periſh. So Chriſt tells us, *Prov.* 8. 36.

Non quod quisque ita insa-iat, ut sciens & volens diligat mortem; quam omnes natura exhorreſcimus: ſed quia iſta eſt fructus ſpretæ ſapientiæ Dei, ut mortem tandem afferat. Lavat. in loc.

8. 36. *all they that hate me love death:* Not in it ſelf, but in its cauſes; with which it is inſeparably connected: they are loth to burn, yet willing to ſin; though ſin kindle thoſe everlaſting flames. So that in two things the unbeliever ſhews himſelf worſe than bruitiſh, he can't think of damnation the effect of ſin, without horror, and yet cannot think of ſin the cauſe of damnation, without pleaſure: he is loth to periſh to all eternity without remedy, and yet refuſes and declines Chriſt as if he were an enemy, who only can and would deliver him from that eternal perdition.

How do men act therefore as if they were in love with their own ruin? many poor wretches now in the way to Hell, what an hard ſhift do they make to caſt themſelves away! Chriſt meets them many times in the Ordinances; where they ſtudiouſly ſhun him: many times checks them in their way by convictions, which they make an hard ſhift to overcome, and conquer: oh how willing are they to accept a cure, a benefit, a remedy for any thing but their Souls! You ſee then that Sinners cannot, (ſhould they ſtudy all their days to do themſelves a miſchief) take a readier courſe to undo themſelves, than by rejecting Chriſt in his gracious offers.

Surely the ſin of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* is leſs than this ſin, mercy it ſelf is exaſperated by it, and the damnation of ſuch as reject Chriſt (ſo prepared for them, with whatever they need, and ſo ſeriouſly and frequently offer'd to them upon the Knee of Goſpel intreaty) is juſt, *inevitable*, and more *intolerable* than any in the world beſide them. It is *juſt*, for the ſinner hath but his own option, or choice: he is but come to the end which he was often told his way would bring him to. It is *inevitable*, for there is no other way to Salvation but that which is rejected: and it will be more *intolerable* than the Damnation of others, becauſe neither *Heathens* nor *Devils* ever aggravated their ſins by ſuch an horrid circumſtance, as the wilful refuſing of ſuch an apt, offered, and only remedy.

Infer.

Infer. 4.

What a tremendous Symptome of wrath, and ſad Character of Death appears upon that mans Soul to which no effectual application of Chriſt can be made by the Goſpel! *Infer.* 4.

Chriſt with his benefits is frequently tendered to them in the Goſpel, they have been beſeeched once and again upon the Knee of importunity to accept him, thoſe entreaties and perſwaſions have been urged by the greateſt arguments, The Command of God, the love of Chriſt, the inconceiveable happineſs or miſery which unavoidably follows the accepting or rejecting of thoſe offers, and yet nothing will ſtick: all their pleas for infidelity have been over and over confuted, their reaſons and conſciences have ſtood convinced, they have been *Speechleſs* as well as *Chriſtleſs*: not one ſound argument is found with them to defend their infidelity: they confeſs in general, that ſuch courſes as theirs is, lead to deſtruction: they will yield them to be happy ſouls that are in Chriſt: and yet when it comes to the point, their own cloſing with him; nothing will ſtick; all arguments, all entreaties return to us without ſucceſs.

Lord! what is the reaſon of this unaccountable obſtinacy! in other things it is not ſo: if they be ſick they are ſo far from rejecting a phyſician that offers himſelf, that they will ſend and pray, and pay him too: if they be arreſted for debt, and any one will be a ſurety and, pay their debts for them; words can hardly expreſs the ſenſe they have of ſuch a kindneſs: but though Chriſt would be both phyſician and ſurety, and what ever elſe their needs require, they will rather periſh to eternity than accept him: what may we fear to be the reaſon of this, but becauſe they are not of Chriſts ſheep, *Joh.* 10.26. the Lord open the eyes of poor ſinners to apprehend not only how great a ſin, but how dreadful a ſign this is.

Infer. 5.

If Chriſt with all his benefits be made ours by Gods ſpecial application; what a day of mercies then is the day of converſion! What multitudes of choice bleſſings viſit the converted ſoul in that day! *Infer.* 5.

This day (saith Christ to *Zacheus* Luke 19. 9.) *is Salvation come to this house*: in this day Christ cometh into the soul, and he comes not empty; but brings with him all his treasures of wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Troops of mercies, yea of the best of mercies come with him. It is a day of singular gladness and joy to the heart of Christ when he is Espoused to, and received by the believing soul: it is as a Coronation day to a King. So you read *Cant.* 3. 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the Crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his Espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*

Where under the Type of *Solomon* in his greatest magnificence and glory, when the royal *Diadem* was set upon his head, and the people shouted for joy, so that the earth did ring again; is shadowed out the joy of Christs heart, when poor souls by their high estimation of him, and consent to his government, do as it were Crown him with glory and honour, and make his heart glad.

Now if the day of our Espousals to Christ be the day of the gladness of his heart, and he reckons himself thus honoured, and glorified by us; what a day of joy and gladness should it be to our hearts, and how should we be transported with joy to see a King from heaven with all his treasures of grace and glory bestowing himself freely and everlastingly upon us, as our portion! No wonder *Zacheus* came down joyfully *Luke* 19. 6. That the *Eunuch* went home rejoicing, *Act.* 8. 39. That the Jaylor rejoyced, believing in God with all his household, *Act.* 16. 34. That they that were converted did eat their meat with gladness, praising God, *Act.* 2. 41. 46. That there was great joy among them of *Samaria* when Christ came among them in the preaching of the Gospel, *Acts* 8. 5. 8. I say it's no wonder, we read of such Joy accompanying Christ into the soul, when we consider that in one day so many blessings meet together in it, the least of which is not to be exchanged for all the Kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them. Eternity it self will but suffice to bless God for the mercies of this one day.

Infer.

Infer. 6.

If Chriſt be made all this to every Soul unto whom he is effectually applyed, what cauſe then have thoſe ſouls that are under the preparatory work of the ſpirit, and are come nigh to Chriſt and all his benefits; to ſtretch out their hands with vehement deſire to Chriſt, and give him the moſt importunate invitation into their Souls! *Infer.* 6.

The whole world is diſtinguiſhable into three claſſes or ſorts of perſons, ſuch as are *far from Chriſt*, ſuch as are *not far from Chriſt*, and ſuch as are *in Chriſt*: they that are in Chriſt have heartily received him: ſuch as are far from Chriſt will not open to him; their hearts are faſt barred by ignorance, prejudice and unbelief againſt him; but thoſe that are come under the preparatory workings of the ſpirit nigh to Chriſt, who ſee their own indiſpenſable neceſſity of him, and his ſuitableneſs to their neceſſities, in whom alſo encouraging hopes begin to dawn, and their ſouls are waiting at the foot of God for power to receive him, for an heart to cloſe ſincerely and univerſally with him; oh what vehement deſires! what ſtrong pleas! what moving arguments ſhould ſuch perſons urge and plead to win Chriſt, and get poſſeſſion of him! they are in ſight of their only remedy: Chriſt and Salvation are come to their very doors; there wants but a few things to make them bleſſed for ever: this is the day in which their ſouls are exerciſed greatly betwixt hopes and fears: now they are much alone, and deep in thoughtfulneſs, they weep and make ſupplication for an heart to believe, and that againſt the great diſcouragements with which they encounter.

Reader, if this be the caſe of thy ſoul; it will not be the leaſt piece of ſervice I can do for thee, to ſuggeſt ſuch pleas as in this caſe are proper to be urged for the attainment of thy deſires, and the cloſing of the match betwixt Chriſt and thee.

Firſt, Plead the abſolute neceſſity which now drives thee to Chriſt: tell him thy hope is utterly periſhed in all other refuges: thou art come like a ſtarving beggar to the laſt door of hope: tell him thou now beginneſt to ſee the abſolute neceſſity of Chriſt: thy body hath not ſo much need

of

of bread, water, or air, as thy ſoul hath of Chriſt, and that wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption that are in him.

Secondly, Plead the Fathers gracious deſign in furniſhing and ſending him into the world, and his own deſign in accepting the Fathers call. Lord Jeſus, waſt thou not *anointed to preach good tydings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound*? behold an *Object* ſuitable to thine *Office*: whileſt I was ignorant of my condition, I had a proud rebellious heart, but conviction and ſelf-acquaintance have now meekned it: my heart was harder than the nether milſtone, and it was as eaſie to diſſolve the obdurate rocks into ſyrrup, as to thaw and melt my heart for ſin; but now God hath made my heart ſoft, I ſenſibly feel the miſery of my condition. I once thought my ſelf at perfect liberty, but now I ſee what I conceited to be perfect liberty, is perfect bondage; and never did a poor priſoner ſigh for deliverance more than I. Since then thou haſt given me a ſoul thus qualified (though ſtill unworthy) for the exerciſe of thine office, and execution of thy commiſſion: Lord Jeſus, be according to thy name a *Jeſus* unto me.

Iſai. 16. 1, 2.

Thirdly, Plead the unlimited and general invitations made to ſuch ſouls as you are, to come to Chriſt freely. Lord, thou haſt made open Proclamation; *Ho every one that thirſteth come ye to the waters, Iſai.* 55. 1. and *Revel.* 22. 17. *him that is athirſt come*: in obedience to thy call Lo I come, had I not been invited, my coming to thee (dear Lord Jeſus) had been an act of preſumption, but this makes it an act of duty and obedience.

Fourthly, Plead the unprofitableneſs of thy blood to God. Lord there is no profit in my blood, it will turn to no more advantage to thee to deſtroy than it will to ſave me: if thou ſend me to hell (as the merit of my ſin calls upon thy Juſtice to do) I ſhall be there diſhonouring thee to all eternity, and the debt I owe thee never pay'd: but if thou apply thy Chriſt to me for righteouſneſs; ſatisfaction for all that I have done will be laid down in one full round ſum: indeed if the honour of thy Juſtice lay as a bar to my pardon, it would ſtop my mouth; but when thy Juſtice as well as mercy

mercy shall both rejoyce together, and be glorified and pleased in the same act, what hinders but that Christ be apply'd to my soul: since in so doing God can be no loser by it?

Fifthly, Lastly, Plead thy complyance with the terms of the Gospel: tell him Lord, my will complys fully and heartily to all thy gracious terms. I can now subscribe a blank: let God offer his Christ on what terms he will, my heart is ready to comply. I have no exception against any Article of the Gospel: and now Lord I wholly refer my self to thy pleasure: do with me what seemeth good in thine eyes: only give me an interest in Jesus Christ: as to all other concerns I lye at thy feet in full resignation of all to thy pleasure. Never yet did any perish in that posture and frame: and I hope I shall not be made the first instance and example.

Inference 7. *Infer. 7.*

Lastly, *If Christ with all his benefits, be made ours by special application; how contented, thankful, comfortable and hopeful should believers be in every condition which God casts them into in this world!*

After such a mercy as this, let them never open their mouths any more to repine and grudge at the outward inconveniencies of their condition in this world: what are the things you want, compared with the things you enjoy? what is a little money, health or liberty, to wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? all the Crowns and Scepters in the world sold to their full value, are no price for the least of these mercies: but I will not insist here, your duty lyes much higher than contentment.

Be thankful as well as content in every state: *blessed be God* (saith the Apostle) *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all* [*spiritual blessings*] *in heavenly places in Christ*: O think what are men to Angels; that Christ should pass by them to become a Saviour to men! and what art thou among men, that thou shouldst be taken, and others left! and among all the mercies of God, what mercies

mercies are comparable to theſe confer'd upon thee? O bleſs God in the loweſt ebb of outward comforts, for ſuch priviledges as theſe.

And yet you will not come up to your Duty in all this, except you be joyful in the Lord, and rejoyce evermore after the receipt of ſuch mercies as theſe: *Philip.* 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous, and again I ſay rejoyce*: for hath not the poor Captive reaſon to rejoyce, when he hath recovered his liberty: the Debtor to rejoyce, when all ſcores are cleared and he owes nothing: the weary traveller to rejoyce, though he be not owner of a ſhilling, when he is come almoſt home where all his wants ſhall be ſupplied? Why this is your caſe, when Chriſt once becomes yours: you are the Lords freemen: your debts to Juſtice are all ſatisfied by Chriſt: and you are within a little of compleat redemption from all the troubles and inconveniencies of your preſent ſtate.

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

The

The Second SERMON.

Serm. 2.

Wherein the believers Union with Chriſt is ſtated, and opened as a principal part of Goſpel Application.

JOHN 17. 23.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.

THE deſign and end of the Application of Chriſt to Sinners, is the Communication of his benefits to them: but ſeeing all Communications of benefits neceſſarily imply *Communion*, and all Communion as neceſſarily preſuppoſes *Union* with his perſon: I ſhall therefore in this place, and from this Scripture treat of the *Myſtical Union* betwixt Chriſt and believers: this Union being the principal act wherein the Spirits *application* of Chriſt conſiſts; of which I ſpake (as to its general nature) in the former Sermon.

In this Verſe (omitting the Contexture) we find a threefold Union. One betwixt the Father and Chriſt, a ſecond betwixt Chriſt and believers: a third betwixt believers themſelves.

Firſt, *Thou in me*: this is a glorious ineffable Union, and is fundamental to the other two: the Father is not only in Chriſt, in reſpect of *dear affection*, as one friend is in another who is as his own ſoul: nor only *eſſentially*, in reſpect of

the *identity* and ſameneſs of nature and attributes; in which reſpect Chriſt is the *expreſs Image of his perſon*, *Heb.* 1. 3. but he is in Chriſt alſo as *Mediator*, by communicating the fulneſs of the godhead which dwells in him as *God-man*, in a tranſcendant and ſingular manner; ſo as it never dwelt, nor can dwell in any other, *Col.* 2. 9.

Secondly, *I in them*, here is the *Myſtical Union* betwixt Chriſt and the Saints: *q. d.* thou and I are one *eſſentially*, they and I are one *myſtically*: thou and I are one by the communication of the Godhead, and ſingular fulneſs of the Spirit to me as Mediator; and they and I are one, by my communication of the Spirit to them in meaſure.

Thirdly, From hence reſults a third Union betwixt believers themſelves: *that they may be made perfect in one*: the ſame Spirit dwelling in them all, and equally uniting them all to me, as living members to their head of influence, there muſt needs be a dear and intimate Union betwixt themſelves as fellow members of the ſame body.

Now, my buſineſs at this time lying in the ſecond branch, namely the Union betwixt Chriſt and believers, I ſhall gather up the ſubſtance of it into this Doctrinal propoſition, to which I ſhall apply this diſcourſe.

Doct.

That there is a ſtrict and dear Union betwixt Chriſt and all true believers.

The Scriptures have borrowed from the book of Nature four elegant and lively *Metaphors* to help the Nature of this Myſtical Union with Chriſt into our underſtandings; Namely, that of two pieces of *timber*, united by glew: that of a *graff* taking hold of its ſtock; and making one tree: that of the *husband* and *wife*, by the marriage Covenant becoming one fleſh: and that of the *members* and head animated by one ſoul, and ſo becoming one Natural body. Every one of theſe is more lively and full than the other, and what is defective in one, is ſupplied in the other; but yet, neither any of theſe ſingly, or all of them jointly, can give us a full and compleat account of this Myſtery.

Not

Not that of two pieces united by glew, 1*Cor.* 6. 17. *he that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit*: κολλώμενος, glewed to the Lord. For though this cementeth, and ſtrongly joyns them in one; yet this is but a faint and imperfect ſhadow of our Union with Chriſt: for though this Union by glew be *intimate*, yet it is not *vital*; but ſo is that of the ſoul with Chriſt. 1 Cor. 6. 17.

Nor that of the graff and ſtock mentioned *Rom.* 6. 5. for thought it be there ſaid that believers are σύμφυτοι, *implanted*, or ingraffed by way of inciſion, and this Union betwixt it and the ſtock be *vital*; for it partakes of the vital ſap and juice of it; yet here alſo is a remarkable defect, for the graff is of a more excellent kind and nature than the ſtock, and upon that account the tree receives its *denomination* from it, as from the more noble and excellent part; but Chriſt into whom believers are ingraffed, is infinitely more excellent than they, and they are denominated from him. Rom. 6. 5.

Nor yet that *Conjugal Union* by marriage Covenant betwixt a man and his wife; for though this be exceeding dear and intimate, ſo that a man leaves father and mother, and cleaves to his wife, and they two become one fleſh: yet this Union is not *indiſſolvable*, but may and muſt be broken by death; and then the *relict* lives alone without any Communion with, or relation to the perſon that was once ſo dear: but this betwixt Chriſt and the ſoul can never be diſſolved by death, it abides to eternity. Eph. 6. 32.

Nor Laſtly, That of the *head* and *members* united by one vital Spirit and ſo making one *Phyſical body*, mentioned *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. for though one ſoul actuates every member, yet it doth not knit every member alike near to the head, but ſome are nearer, and others removed farther from it; but here every member is alike nearly united with Chriſt the head, the weak are as near to him as the ſtrong. Eph. 4. 15, 16.

Two things are neceſſary to be opened in the doctrinal part of this point.

1. The reality
2. The quality } of this Union.

Firſt, For the reality of it, I ſhall make it appear that there is ſuch a Union betwixt Chriſt and believers: it is no *Ens rationis*, 1.

tionis, empty notion, or cunningly deviſed fable; but a moſt certain demonſtrable truth, which appears,

First, From the *Communion* which is betwixt Chriſt and believers: in this the Apoſtle is expreſs, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his ſon Jeſus Chriſt*: κοινωνία. It ſignifies ſuch fellowſhip or Copartnerſhip as perſons have by a joynt intereſt in one and the ſame enjoyment, which is in common betwixt them. So *Heb.* 3. 14. we are μέτοχοι, *partakers of Chriſt*, and *Pſal.* 45. 7. חֲבֵרֶיךָ here the Saints are called the companions, conſorts, or fellows of Chriſt: and that not only in reſpect of his aſſumption of our mortality, and inveſting us with his immortality; but it hath a ſpecial reference and reſpect to the Unction of the Holy Ghoſt, or graces of the Spirit of which believers are partakers with him and through him. Now this Communion of the Saints with Chriſt is entirely and neceſſarily dependant upon their Union with him, even as much as the branches participation of the ſap and juice, depends upon its Union and coalition with the ſtock: take away Union, and there can be no communion, or communications, which is clear from 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *All is yours, and ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*: where you ſee how all our participation of Chriſts benefits, is built upon our Union with Chriſts perſon.

Ipſe venit in ſortem noſtræ mortalitatis, ut in ſortem nos adduceret ſuæ immortalitatis: clarum autem eſt, hic agi de conſortibus unctionis; quales ſunt omnes fideles qui unctionis participes fiunt. Rivet.

Secondly, The reality of the believers *Union* with Chriſt is evident from the *Imputation* of Chriſts righteouſneſs to him for his Juſtification. That a believer is juſtified before God by a righteouſneſs without himſelf is undeniable from *Rom.* 3. 24. *being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*: and that Chriſts righteouſneſs becomes ours by *Imputation*, is as clear from *Rom.* 4. 23, 24. but it can never be imputed to us, except we be united to him, and become one with him: which is alſo plainly aſſerted in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *But of him are ye (in Chriſt Jeſus) who of God is made unto us wiſdome, and righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption*: he communicates his merits unto none but thoſe that are in him: hence all thoſe vain cavils of the Papiſts diſputing againſt our Juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and aſſerting it to be by inherent righteouſneſs, are ſolidly anſwered.

When

When they demand, how can we be juſtified by the righteouſneſs of another? can I be rich with another mans money, or preferr'd by anothers honours? Our anſwer is, Yes, if that other be my ſurety or husband: indeed *Peter* cannot be juſtified by the righteouſneſs of *Paul*: but both may be juſtified by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them; they being members joyntly knit to one common head: *principal* and *ſurety* are one in obligation, and conſtruction of Law: head and members are one body, branch and ſtock are one tree, and it's no ſtrange thing to ſee a graff live by the ſap of another ſtock, when once it is ingraffed into it.

Thirdly, The *Sympathy* that is betwixt Chriſt and believers proves a Union betwixt them: Chriſt and the Saints ſmile and ſigh together. St. *Paul* in *Coloſ.* 1. 2, 4. tells us that he did fill up that which is behind, τὰ ὑστερήματα —— the remainders of the *ſufferings of Chriſt in his Fleſh*: not as if Chriſts ſufferings were imperfect, (*for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, *Heb.* 10. 14.) but in theſe two Scriptures Chriſt is conſider'd in a twofold capacity: he ſuffered once in *Corpore proprio*, in his own perſon as mediator; theſe ſufferings are compleat and full, and in that ſenſe he ſuffers no more: he ſuffers alſo in *Corpore myſtico*, in his Church and members, thus he ſtill ſuffers in the ſufferings of every Saint for his ſake: and though theſe ſufferings in his Myſtical body, are not equal to the other, either *pondere & menſura*, in their weight and value, nor yet deſigned *ex officio*, for the ſame uſe and purpoſe, to ſatisfie by their proper merit offended Juſtice; nevertheleſs they are truly reckoned the ſufferings of Chriſt, becauſe the head ſuffers when the members do: and without this ſuppoſition, that place, *Acts* 9. 5. is never to be underſtood, when Chriſt the head in Heaven crys out, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* when the toe was trod upon on earth: how doth Chriſt ſenſibly feel our ſufferings or we his, if there be not a Myſtical Union betwixt him and us?

Fourthly and Laſtly, The way and manner in which the Saints ſhall be raiſed at the laſt day, proves this *Myſtical Union* betwixt Chriſt and them: for they are not to be raiſed as others, by the naked power of God without them, but by the

the vertue of Chriſts reſurrection as their head, ſending forth vital quickening influences into their dead bodies, which are united to him as well as their ſouls. For ſo we find it, *Rom.* 8. 11. *But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, dwell in you: he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you*: even as it is in our awakening out of natural ſleep, firſt the *animal ſpirits* in the head begin to rouze and play there, and then the ſenſes and members are looſed throughout the whole body.

Now it's impoſſible the Saints ſhould be raiſed in the laſt reſurrection, by the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in them; if that Spirit did not knit and unite them to him, as members to their head. So then, by all this it is proved that there is a real Union of the Saints with Chriſt.

2. Next I ſhall endeavour to open the *quality* and *nature* of this Union: and ſhew you what it is, according to the weak apprehenſions we have of ſo ſublime a Myſtery: and this I ſhall do in a

General and Particular } account of it.

1. Firſt, More *generally*, it is an intimate conjunction of believers to Chriſt by the imparting of his Spirit to them, whereby they are enabled to believe and live in him.

All divine Spiritual life is *originally* in the Father, and cometh not to us but by, and through the ſon; *Joh.* 5. 26. to him hath the Father given to have an ζωὴν ---- a quickening, enlivening power in himſelf: but the Son communicates this life which is in him to none but by and through the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 2. *the Spirit of life which is in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the Law of ſin and death.*

The Spirit muſt therefore firſt take hold of us, before we can live in Chriſt; and when he doth ſo, then we are enabled to exert that vital act of faith, whereby we receive Chriſt: all this lyes plain in that one Scripture, *Joh.* 6. 57. *As the living Father hath ſent me, and I live by the Father; ſo he that eateth me* (that is by faith applys me) *even he ſhall live by me.*

So

So that theſe two, namely the *Spirit* on Chriſts part, and *Faith* his work, on our part, are the two ligaments by which we are knit to Chriſt.

So that the Spirits work in uniting or engrafſing a ſoul into Chriſt is like the cutting off the graff from its native ſtock (which he doth by his illuminations and convictions) and cloſing it with the living ſtock when it is thus prepared, and ſo enabling it (by the infuſion of faith) to ſuck and draw the vital ſap, and thus it becomes one with it. Or as the many members in the natural body, being all quickened and animated by the ſame vital Spirit, become one body with the head which is the principal member: *Eph.* 4. 4. *there is one body, and one Spirit.*

More *particularly*, we ſhall conſider the properties of this Union, that ſo we may the better underſtand the nature of it. And here I ſhall open the nature of it both *negatively*, and *affirmatively*. 2.

Firſt, Negatively, by removing all falſe notions and miſ- apprehenſions of it. And we ſay, 1. *Negatively.*

Firſt, The Saints Union with Chriſt is not a *meer mental Union*, only in conceit and notion, but really exiſts *extra mentem*, whether we conceit it or not. I know the atheiſtical world cenſures all theſe things as fancies, and idle imaginations; but believers know the reality of them. *Joh.* 14. 20. *At that day you ſhall know that I am in my father, and you in me, and I in you.* This doctrine is not *phantaſtical*, but *ſcientifical.* 1.

Secondly, The Saints Union with Chriſt is not a *Phyſical Union*, ſuch as is betwixt the members of a natural body and the head: our Nature indeed is aſſumed into Union with the perſon of Chriſt, but it is the ſingular honour of that bleſſed and holy fleſh of Chriſt, to be ſo united, as to make one perſon with him: that Union is *hypoſtatical*, this only *Myſtical.* 2.

Thirdly, Nor is it an *Eſſential Union*, or Union with the divine nature, ſo as our beings are thereby ſwallowed up and loſt in the divine being. 3.

Some there be indeed that talk at that wild rate, of being Godded into God, and Chriſted into Chriſt: and thoſe unwary expreſſions of *Greg. Naz.* Θεοποιεῖν, and χριστοποιεῖν, do but

but too much countenance thoſe daring Spirits: but oh there is an infinite diſtance betwixt us and Chriſt in reſpect of nature and excellency notwithſtanding this Union.

4. Fourthly, The Union I here ſpeak of, is not a *fœderal Union*; or an Union by Covenant only: ſuch a Union indeed there is betwixt Chriſt and believers, but that is conſequential to and wholly dependent upon this.

5. Fifthly, and Laſtly, It is not a *meer Moral Union* by love and affection: thus we ſay, one ſoul is in two bodies, a friend is another ſelf: the lover is in the perſon beloved: ſuch a Union of hearts and affections there is alſo betwixt Chriſt and the Saints, but this is of another nature: that we call a *Moral*, this a *Myſtical* Union: that only knits our *affections*, but this knits our *perſons* to Chriſt.

2. *Poſitively.* Secondly, Poſitively, and Firſt, though this Union neither

1. makes us one perſon, or eſſence with Chriſt, yet it knits our perſons moſt *intimately* and nearly to the perſon of Chriſt: the Church is Chriſts body, *Coloſſ.* 1. 24. not his *Natural*, but his *Myſtical* body: that is to ſay, his body in a Myſtery: becauſe it is to him as his natural body: the Saints ſtand to Chriſt in the ſame relation that the natural members of the body ſtand to the head, and he ſtands in the ſame relation to them, that the head ſtands in to the natural members: and conſequently they ſtand related to one another, as the members of a natural body do to each other.

Chriſt and the Saints are not one as the *Oak* and the *Ivy* that claſps it are one; but as the graff and ſtock are one: it is not a Union by *adheſion*, but *incorporation*. Husband and Wife are not ſo near, ſoul and body are not ſo near as Chriſt and the believing ſoul are near to each other.

2. Secondly, The Myſtical Union is wholly ſupernatural: wrought by the alone power of God. So it's ſaid 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *but of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus*: we can no more unite our ſelves to Chriſt, than a branch can incorporate it ſelf into another ſtock: it is of him (*i. e.*) of God, his proper and alone work.

There are only two ligaments or bands of Union betwixt Chriſt and the Soul, *viz.* the *Spirit* on his part, and *Faith* on ours: but when we ſay faith is the band of Union on our part,

part, the meaning is not, that it's so our own act, as that it springs naturally from us, or is educed from the power of our own wills; no, for the Apostle expresly contradicts it, *Eph.* 2. 8. *it is not of your selves, it is the gift of God:* but we are the subjects of it, and though the act on that account be ours, yet the power enabling us to believe is God's. *Eph.* 1. 19, 20.

Thirdly, the Mystical Union is an *immediate Union*: Immediate I say, not as excluding means and instruments, for several means and many instruments are employ'd for the effecting of it: but immediate as excluding degrees of nearness among the members of Christs mystical body. 3.

Every member in the Natural body stands not as near to the head as another: but so do all the mystical members of Christs body to him; every member, the smallest, as well as the greatest hath an immediate coalition with Christ. 1 Cor. 1. 2. *To the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus; called to be Saints: with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs, and ours.*

Among the *factious* in this Church at *Corinth*, those that said *I am of Christ*; as arrogating Christ to themselves; were as much a *faction*, as those that said *I am of Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. to cure this he tells them, he is *both theirs and ours.* Such inclosures are against law.

Fourthly, The Saints Mystical Union with Christ is a *fundamental Union:* it's fundamental by way of *Sustentation*: all our fruits of obedience depend upon it. *John* 15. 4. *As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the Vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me.* It's fundamental to all our priviledges and comfortable claims, 1 *Cor.* 3. ult. *all is yours for ye are Christs.* And it is fundamental to all our hopes, and expectations of glory; for it is *Christ in you the hope of glory, Col.* 1. 27. So then destroy this Union, and with it you destroy all our fruits, priviledges and eternal hopes at one stroke. 4.

Fifthly, The Mystical Union is a most *Efficacious Union*, for through this Union the divine power flows into our souls; both to quicken us with the life of Christ, and to conserve and secure that life in us after it is so infused. 5.

Without the *Unition* of the ſoul to Chriſt, which is to be conceived *efficiently* as the Spirits act, there can be no *Union formally* conſidered; and without theſe, no communications of life from Chriſt to us. *Eph.* 4. 16. And when there is that ἐνέργεια or effectual working of the ſpirit of life in every part, which he there ſpeaks of, (as who ſhould ſay, the firſt bublings up of the new life, a ſpiritual vitality diffuſed through the ſoul which ere while was dead in ſin) yet ſtill this Union with Chriſt is as neceſſary to the *maintaining*, as before it was to the *producing* of it.

For why is it that this life is not again extinguiſhed and wholly ſuffocated in us by ſo many deadly wounds as are given it by temptations and corruptions? ſurely no reaſon can be aſſigned more ſatisfying than that which Chriſt himſelf gives us in *John* 14. 19. *becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.* q. d. whilſt there is vital ſap in me the root, you that are branches in me, cannot wither and dye.

Sixthly, The Myſtical Union is an *indiſſoluble Union*: there is an everlaſting tye betwixt Chriſt and the believer: and herein alſo it is beyond all other Unions in the world: death diſſolves the dear Union betwixt the husband and wife, friend and friend, yea betwixt ſoul and body; but not betwixt Chriſt and the ſoul: the bands of this Union rot not in the grave: *what ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* ſaith the Apoſtle *Rom.* 8. 35, 38, 39. he bids defiance to all enemies, and triumphs in the firmneſs of this Union over all hazards that ſeem to threaten it. It is with Chriſt and us in reſpect of the *Myſtical Union*, as it was with Chriſt himſelf in reſpect of the *hypoſtatical Union*: that was not diſſolved by his death when the *Natural Union* betwixt his ſoul and body was; nor can this myſtical Union of our ſouls and bodies with Chriſt be diſſolved when the Unions betwixt us and our deareſt relations, yea betwixt the ſoul and body are diſſolved by death. God calls himſelf the God of *Abraham*, long after his body was turned into duſt.

7. Seventhly, It is an *honourable Union**, yea the higheſt honour that can be done unto men: the greateſt honour that

* *Apex, caput, & vertex nobilitatis eſt Chriſtus, ſine quo nihil eſt in toto hoc ſublunari orbe terrarum nobile, cujus ſolium eſt cœlum, & cujus ſcabellum eſt terra; terra inquam, in qua horum omnis cognatio & nobilitas ſita eſt & collocata, divinis illius pedibus ſubſternitur.* Laurenc. Humfredus de nobilitate lib. 2. p. 176.

was

was ever done to our common nature, was by its aſſumption into Unity with the ſecond perſon *hypoſtatically*, and the higheſt honour that was ever done to our ſingle perſons was their Union with Chriſt *myſtically*. To be a ſervant of Chriſt is a dignity tranſcendent to the higheſt advancement among men; but to be a member of Chriſt, how matchleſs and ſingular is the glory thereof! and yet ſuch honour have all the Saints, *Eph.* 5. 30. *we are members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones.*

Eighthly, It is a moſt *Comfortable Union*: yea, the ground of all ſolid comfort both in life and death: whatever troubles, wants, or diſtreſſes befal ſuch, in this is abundant relief and ſupport. Chriſt is mine, and I am his; what may not a ſoul make out of that! If I am Chriſts, then let him take care for me, and indeed in ſo doing, he doth but care for his own: he is my head, and to him it belongs to conſult the ſafety and welfare of his own members: *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. he is not only an head to his own by way of *Influence*, but to all things elſe by way of *dominion*, for their good: how comfortably may we repoſe our ſelves under that cheering conſideration upon him at all times, and in all difficult caſes! 8.

Ninthly, It is a *fruitful Union*: the immediate end of it is fruit: *Rom.* 7. 4. *we are married to Chriſt, that we ſhould bring forth fruit to God*: all the fruit we bear before our ingrafture into Chriſt, is worſe than none: till the perſon be in Chriſt, the work cannot be Evangelically good, and acceptable to God: *we are made accepted in the beloved, Eph.* 1. 6. Chriſt is a fruitful root, and makes all the branches that live in him ſo too, *Joh.* 15. 8. 9.

Tenthly and Laſtly, It is an *enriching Union*: for by our Union with his perſon we are immediately intereſſed in all his riches, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. how rich and great a perſon do the little arms of Faith claſp and embrace! *All is yours*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. all that Chriſt hath, becomes ours, either by communication to us, or improvement for us: his Father, *Joh.* 20. 17. his promiſes, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. his providences, *Rom.* 8. 28. his glory, *Joh.* 17. 24. it's all ours by vertue of our Union with him. 10.

Thus you ſee briefly what the Myſtical Union is. Next we ſhall improve it.

Inference 1.

Infer. 1. *Si vis vir virtutis appellari, indue te Christum, qui est Dei virtus & sapientia; & in omnibus adjunge te domino, ita ut unus cum eo spiritus fias, & tunc vir virtutis efficieris.* Orig. Hom. in Numb. 31.

If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and believers, oh then what transcendent dignity hath God put upon believers!

Well might *Constantine* prefer the honour of being a member of the Church before that of being head of the Empire: for it is not only above all earthly dignities and honours; but in some respect above that honour which God hath put upon the Angels of glory.

Great is the dignity of the Angelical nature, they are the highest and most honourable species of creatures: they also have the honour continually to behold the face of God in Heaven, and yet in this one respect the Saints are preferr'd to them, they have a Mystical Union with Christ as their head of influence, by whom they are quickned with spiritual life, which the Angels have not.

Eph. 1. 10. It is true, there is an ἀνακεφαλαίωσις or gathering together of all in heaven and earth under Christ as a common head: he is the head of *Angels*, as well as Saints; but in different respects: to Angels he is an head of *dominion* and government, but to Saints he is both an head of dominion and vital *influence* too: they are his chief and most honourable subjects, but not his Mystical members: they are as the *Barons* and *Nobles* in his Kingdome, but the Saints as the dear *Spouse* and wife of his bosome: this dignifies the believer above the greatest Angel. And as the Nobles of the Kingdome think it a preferment and honour to serve the *Queen*, so the glorious *Angels* think it no degradation or dishonour to them to serve the Saints: for to this honourable office they are appointed, *Heb.* 1. 14. to be ministring or serviceable spirits for the good of them that shall be heirs of salvation: the chiefest servant disdains not to honour and serve the heir.

Some imperious Grandees would frown, should some of these persons but presume to approach their presence, but God sets them before his face with delight, and Angels delight to serve them.

Infer.

Infer. 2.

If there be ſuch a ſtrict and inſeparable Union betwixt Chriſt and believers, then the graces of believers can never totally fail: immortality is the privilege of grace, becauſe ſanctified perſons are inſeparably united to Chriſt the fountain of life: your life is hid with Chriſt in God, Coloſſ. 3. 3. Whilſt the ſap of life is in the root, the branches live by it: thus it is betwixt *Chriſt* and believers, *Joh.* 14. 19. *becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo*: ſee how Chriſt binds up their life in one bundle with his own, plainly intimating it is as impoſſible for them to dye, as it is for himſelf, he cannot live without them. *Infer.* 2.

True it is, the ſpiritual life of believers is encountred by many ſtrong and fierce oppoſitions: it is alſo brought to a low ebb in ſome, but we are always to remember there are ſome things which pertain to the eſſence of that life, in which the very being of it lyes, and ſome things that pertain only to its *well-being*: all thoſe things which belong to the *well-being* of the new creature, as manifeſtations, joys, ſpiritual comforts, *&c.* may for a time fail, yea and grace it ſelf may ſuffer great loſſes and remiſſions in its degrees notwithſtanding our Union with Chriſt; but ſtill the eſſence of it is immortal, which is no ſmall relief to gracious ſouls: when the means of grace fail, as is threatned *Amos* 8. 11. when temporary formal profeſſors drop away from Chriſt like withered leaves from the trees in a windy day, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. and when the natural Union of their ſouls and bodies are ſuffering a diſſolution from each other by death, when that *Silver cord* is looſed, this *Golden chain* holds firm: 1 *Cor.* 3. 23.

Infer. 3.

Is the Union ſo intimate betwixt Chriſt and believers? how great and powerful a motive then is this, to make us open-handed and liberal in relieving the neceſſities and wants of every gracious perſon! for in relieving them we relieve Chriſt himſelf. *Infer.* 3.

Chriſt

Qui reſpectu fratrum Eccleſia non movetur, vel Chriſti contemplatione moveatur; & qui non cogitat in labore & egeſtate conſervum, vel dominum cogitet in ipſo illo quem deſpicit, conſtitutum. Cyprian. de opere & eleemoſynis.

Chriſt *perſonal* is not the object of our pity and charity, he is at the fountain head of all the riches in glory; *Eph.* 4. *v.* 10. but Chriſt *myſtical* is expoſed to neceſſities and wants, he feels hunger and thirſt, cold and pains in his body the Church: and he is refreſhed, relieved and comforted in their refreſhments and comforts: Chriſt the Lord of heaven and earth in this conſideration is ſometimes in need of a penny; he tells us his wants and poverty, and how he is relieved, *Mat.* 25. 35, 40. A Text believed and underſtood by very few, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat. I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink. I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in: Then ſhall the righteous anſwer, Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred,* &c. *And the King ſhall anſwer and ſay unto them, Verily I ſay unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it to me.*

It was the ſaying of a great Divine, that he thought ſcarce any man on earth did fully underſtand and believe this truth, and he conceives ſo much hinted in the very Text where the righteous themſelves reply, *Lord when ſaw we thee ſick,* &c. intimating in the queſtion, that they did not throughly underſtand the nearneſs, yea, *oneneſs* of thoſe perſons with Chriſt, for whom they did theſe things. And indeed, it is incredible that a Chriſtian can be hard hearted, and cloſe handed, to that neceſſitous Chriſtian, in refreſhing and relieving of whom he verily believes that he miniſters refreſhment to Chriſt himſelf.

O think again and again upon this Scripture, conſider what forcible and mighty Arguments are here laid together to engage relief to the wants of Chriſtians.

Here you ſee their near relation to Chriſt: they are Myſtically one perſon: what you did to them, you did to me. Here you ſee alſo how kindly Chriſt takes it at our hands: acknowledging all thoſe kindneſſes that were beſtowed upon him, even to a bit of bread: he is you ſee content to take it as a courteſy, who might demand it by authority, and bereave you of all immediately upon refuſal.

Yea, here you ſee this one ſingle branch or act of obedience, (our charity to the Saints) is ſingled out from among all the duties of obedience, and made the teſt and evidence of our ſincerity in that great day, and men bleſſed or curſed

ſed according to the love they have manifeſted this way to the Saints.

O then henceforth let none that underſtand the relation the Saints have to Chriſt, as the members to the head, or the relation they have to each other thereby as fellow members of the ſame body, from henceforth ſuffer Chriſt to hunger, if they have bread to relieve him, or Chriſt to be thirſty, if they have to refreſh him; this Union betwixt Chriſt and the Saints affords an Argument beyond all other arguments in the world to prevail with us: methinks a little *Rhetorick* might perſwade a Chriſtian to part with any thing he hath to Chriſt, who parted with the glory of heaven, yea, and his heart blood to boot for his ſake.

Inference 4.

Do Chriſt and believers make but one Myſtical perſon? how unnatural and abſurd then are all thoſe acts of unkindneſs whereby believers wound and grieve Jeſus Chriſt! this is as if the hand ſhould wound its own head, from which it receives life, ſenſe, motion, and ſtrength. *Infer.* 4.

When Satan ſmites Chriſt by a wicked man, he then wounds him with the hand of an enemy; but when his temptations prevail upon the Saints to ſin, he wounds him as it were with his own hand: as the *Eagle* and *Tree* in the *Fable* complain'd, the one that he was wounded by an Arrow winged with his own Feathers, the other, that it was rived aſunder by a wedge hewen out of its own limbs.

Now the evil and diſingenuity of ſuch ſins, is to be meaſured not only by the near relation Chriſt ſuſtains to believers as their head, but more particularly, from the ſeveral benefits they receive from him as ſuch: for in wounding Chriſt by their ſins,

Firſt, They wound their *head of influence*, through whom they live, and without whom they had ſtill remain'd in the ſtate of ſin and death. *Eph.* 4. 16. Shall Chriſt ſend life to us, and we return that which is as death to him? O how abſurd, how diſingenuous is this!

Secondly,

Secondly, They wound their *head of government.* Chriſt is a *guiding* as well as a *quickening* head, *Col.* 1. 18. he is your wiſdome, he guides you by his counſels to glory; but muſt he be thus requited for all his faithful conduct! what do you when you ſin againſt him, but rebel againſt his government, refuſing to follow his counſels, and obeying in the mean time a deceiver rather than him.

Thirdly, They wound their *conſulting head* who cares, provides, and projects for the welfare and ſafety of the body. Chriſtians, you know your affairs below have not been ſteered and managed by your own wiſdome, but that orders have been given from heaven for your ſecurity and ſupply from day to day. *I know O Lord* (ſaith the Prophet) *that the way of man is not in himſelf, neither is it in him that walks to direct his own ſteps. Jer.* 10. 23.

It's true, Chriſt is out of your ſight, and you ſee him not; but he ſees you, and orders every thing that concerns you. And is this a due requital of all that care he hath taken for you? Do ye thus requite the Lord, for all his benefits? what! recompence evil for good! O let ſhame cover you.

Fourthly and Laſtly, They wound *their head of honour.* Chriſt your head, is the fountain of honour to you: this is your glory that you relate to him as your head: you are on this account (as before was noted) exalted above Angels.

Now then conſider how vile a thing it is to reflect the leaſt diſhonour upon him from whom you derive all your glory. O conſider and bewail it.

Infer. 5.

Infer. 5. *Qui miſit filium, immiſit ſpiritum, promiſit vultum, quid tandem denegabit?*

Is there ſo ſtrict and intimate a relation and Union betwixt Chriſt and the Saints? then ſurely they can never want what is good for their ſouls or bodies.

Every one naturally cares and provides for his own, eſpecially for his own body; yet we can more eaſily violate the law of nature and be cruel to our own fleſh, than Chriſt can be

be ſo to his Myſtical body. I know it's hard to reſt upon and rejoyce in a promiſe, when neceſſities pinch, and we ſee not from whence relief ſhould ariſe: but oh what ſweet ſatisfaction and comfort might a neceſſitous believer find in theſe conſiderations, would he but keep them upon his heart in ſuch a day of ſtraits!

Firſt, Whatever my diſtreſſes are for quality, number, or degree, they are all *known* even to the leaſt circumſtance by Chriſt my head: he looks down from heaven upon all my afflictions, and underſtands them more fully than I that feel them. *Pſal.* 38. 9. *Lord all my deſire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.*

Secondly, He not only knows them, but *feels* them, as well as knows them: *we have not an high prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb.* 4. 15. in all your afflictions he is afflicted: tender Sympathy cannot but flow from ſuch intimate Union: therefore in *Matth.* 25. 35. he ſaith, I was an hungred, and I was a thirſt, and I was naked. For indeed his Sympathy and tender compaſſion gave him as quick a reſentment, and as tender a ſenſe of their wants, as if they had been his own: yea,

Thirdly, He not only knows and feels my wants, but hath enough in his hand, and much [redacted] enough to ſupply them all: for all things are delivered to him by the Father, *Luk.* 10. 22. all the ſtorehouſes in heaven and earth are his, *Phil.* 4. 19.

Fourthly, He beſtows all earthly good things even to ſuperfluity and redundance upon his enemies, *they have more than heart can wiſh, Pſal.* 73. 7. he is bountiful to ſtrangers: he loads his very enemies with theſe things, and can it be ſuppoſed he will in the mean while ſtarve his own, and neglect thoſe whom he loves as his own fleſh? it cannot be. Moreover

Fifthly, hitherto he hath not ſuffered me to periſh in any former ſtraits: when and where was it that he forſook me? this is not the firſt plunge of trouble I have been in: have I not found him a God at a pinch? how oft have I ſeen him in the Mount of difficulties!

Sixthly, and Laſtly, I have his promiſe and engagement that he will never leave me nor forſake me, *Heb.* 13. 5. and *Joh.* 14. 18. a promiſe never crackt ſince the hour it was firſt made. If then, the Lord Jeſus knows and feels all my wants, hath enough and more than enough to ſupply them, if he gives even to redundance unto his enemies, hath not hitherto forſaken me, and hath promiſed he never will: why then is my ſoul thus diſquieted in me? ſurely there is no cauſe it ſhould be ſo.

Infer. 6.

Infer. 6. *If the Saints are ſo nearly united to Chriſt, as the members to the head; O then how great a ſin, and full of danger is it for any to wrong and perſecute the Saints! For in ſo doing, they muſt needs perſecute Chriſt himſelf.*

Saul, Saul, (ſaith Chriſt) *why perſecuteſt thou me? Acts* 9. 4. The righteous God holds himſelf obliged to vindicate oppreſſed innocency though it be in the perſon of a wicked man, how much more when it is in a member of Chriſt? *He that toucheth you toucheth the Apple of mine eye, Zech.* 2. 8. And is it to be imagined, that Chriſt will ſit ſtill, and ſuffer his enemies to thruſt out the very Apples of his eyes? no, no, *He hath ordained his arrrows againſt the perſecutors, Pſal.* 7. 13.

Ageſilaus *dicere ſolitus eſt, ſe vehementer admirari, eos non haberi in ſacrilegorum numero qui læderent eos qui Deo ſupplicarent vel Deum venerantur: quo ianuit, eos non tantum Sacrilegos eſſe qui deos ipſos, aut templorum ornatum ſpoliarent; ſed eos maxime qui deorum miniſtros, & præcones contumeliis afficiunt.* Æmyl. Prob.

O it were better thy hand ſhould wither, and thine arm fall from thy ſhoulder, than ever it ſhould be lifted up againſt Chriſt in the pooreſt of his members. Believe it Sirs, not only your violent actions, but your hard ſpeeches are all ſet down upon your doomes-days book; and you ſhall be brought to an account for them in the great day, *Jud.* 15. Beware what arrows you ſhoot, and be ſure of your mark before you ſhoot them.

Infer.

Infer. 7.

If there be ſuch a Union betwixt Chriſt and the Saints as hath been deſcribed, upon what comfortable terms then, may believers part with their bodies at Death! *Infer.* 7.

Chriſt your head is above water, therefore you cannot be loſt: nay, he is not only riſen from the dead himſelf, but is alſo *become the firſt-fruits of them that ſleep*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. Believers are his members, his fulneſs, he cannot therefore be compleat without you: a part of Chriſt cannot periſh in the grave, much leſs burn in hell: remember when you feel the Natural Union diſſolving, that this Myſtical Union can never be diſſolved: the pangs of death cannot break this tye: as there is a peculiar excellency in the believers life, ſo there is a ſingular ſupport and peculiar comfort in his death, *to me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain*, *Phil.* 1. 21.

Templum Dei in quo ſpiritus inhabitat patris & membra Chriſti non participare ſalutem, ſed in perditionem redigi dicere: quomodo non maximæ eſt blaſphemiæ? Iren. lib. 5.

Infer. 8.

If there be ſuch a Union betwixt Chriſt and believers, *how doth it concern every man to try and examin his Eſtate, whether he be really united with Chriſt or not; by the natural and proper effects which alwayes flow from this Union?* As *Infer.* 8.

Firſt, The real Communication of Chriſts holineſs to the ſoul: we cannot be United with this root, and not partake of the vital ſap of ſanctification from him: all that are planted into him, are planted into the likeneſs of his death and of his reſurrection, *Rom.* 6. 5, 6. viz. by mortification, and vivification.

Secondly, They that are ſo nearly united to him as members to the head cannot but love him and value him above their own lives: as we ſee in nature, the hand and arm will interpoſe to ſave the head: the nearer the Union, the ſtronger always is the affection.

Thirdly, The members are ſubject to the head: Dominion in the head muſt needs infer ſubjection in the members, *Eph.* 5. 24. in vain do we claim Union with Chriſt as our head,

whilst we are governed by our own wills, and our Lusts give us law.

Fourthly, All that are United to Christ, do bear fruit to God, *Rom.* 7. 4. fruitfulness is the next end of our Union: there are no barren branches growing upon this fruitful root,

Infer. 9.

Infer. 9. Lastly, *how much are believers engaged to walk as the members of Christ, in the visible exercises of all those graces and duties which the consideration of their near relation to him exacts from them!* As

First, How *contented* and well pleased should we be with our outward lot, however providence hath cast it for us in this world. O do not repine, God hath dealt bountifully with you: upon others he hath bestowed the good things of this world, upon you himself in Christ.

Secondly, How *humble* and lowly in spirit should you be under your great advancement! It's true, God hath magnified you greatly by this Union, but yet don't swell, *You bear not the root but the root you, Rom.* 11. 18. You shine, but it is as the Stars, with a borrowed light.

Thirdly, How *Zealous* should you be to honour Christ, who hath put so much honour upon you! Be willing to give glory to Christ, though his glory should rise out of your shame. Never reckon that glory that goes to Christ, to be lost to you: when you lye at his feet in the most particular heart-breaking confessions of sin, yet let this please you, that therein you have given him glory.

Fourthly, how *exact* and circumspect should you be in all your wayes, remembring whose you are, and whom you represent! Shall it be said that a member of Christ was convicted of unrighteous and unholy actions! God forbid: *if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness we lye,* 1 Joh. 1. 6. *and he that saith he abideth in him, ought also himself to walk even as he walked,* 1 Joh. 2. 6.

Fifthly, how *studious* should you be of peace among your selves who are all so nearly united to such a head, and thereby are made fellow-members in the same body! The heathen

world

world was never acquainted with such an Argument as the *Apostle* urges for Unity in *Eph.* 4. 3, 4.

Sixthly and Lastly, how *joyful* and comfortable should you be, to whom Christ with all his treasures and benefits is effectually applyed in this blessed Union of your souls with him! This brings him into your possession: oh how great! how glorious a person do the little weak arms of your faith embrace!

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

The Third SERMON.

Serm. 3.

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2 Cor. 5. 20.

Now then, we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you, we pray you in Christs stead; be ye reconciled to God.

Opening the nature and use of of the Gospel Ministry, as an external means of applying Christ.

THE Effectual Application of Christ principally consists in our Union with him, but (ordinarily) there can be no Union without a Gospel tender and overture of him to our souls, for *how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall he preach except he be sent? Rom.* 10. 14.

If

If God be upon a deſign of marrying poor ſinners to his Son, there muſt be a treaty in order to it: that treaty requires interlocution betwixt both the parties concerned in it: but ſuch is our frailty, that ſhould God ſpeak immediately to us himſelf, it would confound and overwhelm us: God therefore graciouſly condeſcends and accommodates himſelf to our infirmity, in treating with us in order to our Union with Chriſt by his *Ambaſſadors*, and theſe not *Angels* whoſe converſes we cannot bear, but men like our ſelves who are commiſſionated for the effecting of this great buſineſs betwixt Chriſt and us. *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for God*, &c. In which words you have

Firſt, Chriſts Ambaſſadors commiſſionated.

Secondly, Their Commiſſion opened.

Firſt, Chriſts Ambaſſadors commiſſionated. *Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt.* The Lord Jeſus thought it not ſufficient to print the law of grace, and bleſſed terms of our Union with him in the ſcriptures, where men may read his willingneſs to receive them, and ſee the juſt and gracious terms and conditions upon which he offers to become theirs; but hath alſo ſet up and eſtabliſhed a ſtanding office in the Church to expound that Law, inculcate the precepts, and urge the promiſes thereof: to wooe and eſpouſe ſouls to Chriſt, *I have eſpouſed you to one husband, that I may preſent you as a chaſt virgin to Chriſt*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 20. and this not ſimply from their own affections and compaſſions to miſerable ſinners, but alſo by vertue of their office and Commiſſion whereby they are authorized and appointed to that work. *We then are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt.*

Secondly, Their Commiſſion opened: wherein we find

1. Their *work* appointed.
2. Their *Capacity* deſcribed.
3. And the *manner* of their acting in that Capacity *preſcribed.*

Firſt, The work whereunto the Miniſters of the Goſpel are appointed, is to *reconcile the world to God*: to work theſe ſinful, vain, rebellious hearts which have a ſtrong averſation from God naturally in them; to cloſe with him according to the Articles of peace contained in the Goſpel; that thereby they

they may be capable to receive the mercies and benefits purchased by the death of Christ, which they cannot receive in the state of enmity and alienation.

Secondly, Their Capacity described, they act *in Christs stead* as his *Vicegerents*. He is no more in this world to treat personally with sinners as once he did in the dayes of his flesh: but yet he still continues the treaty with this lower world by his officers, requiring men to look upon them, and obey them as they would himself if he were Corporally present, *Luke* 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.*

Thirdly, The manner of their acting in that Capacity prescribed: and that is by humble, sweet, and condescending intreaties and beseechings: this best suits that meek and Lamb-like Saviour whom they represent. Thus he dealt with poor sinners himself when he conversed among them; he would not break a bruised reed nor quench smoaking flax, *Isa.* 42. 3. This is the way to allure and win the souls of sinners to Christ.

From hence the Note is:

Doct.

That the preaching of the Gospel by Christs Ambassadors is the means appointed for the reconciling and bringing home of sinners to Christ. Doct.

This is clear from *Rom.* 10. 14. 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. and many other Scriptures.

Here we shall take into Consideration these three things.

First, what is implyed in Christs treating with sinners by his Ambassadors or Ministers.

Secondly, What the great Concernment they are to treat with sinners about is.

Thirdly, What and when is the Efficacy of preaching to bring sinners to Christ.

First, We will open what is implyed and imported in Christs treaty with sinners by his Ambassadors or Ministers.

And here we find these six things implied.

First, it necessarily implies the defection and fall of man from.

from his eſtate of favour and friendſhip with God: if no war with heaven, what need of *Ambaſſadors* of peace? the very office of the Miniſtry, is an argument of the fall. Goſpel Ordinances and Officers came in upon the fall, and expire with the Mediators diſpenſatory Kingdom, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 25. *Then ſhall he deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father*: thenceforth no more Ordinances, no more Miniſters; what uſe can there be of them, when the treaty is ended? They have done and accompliſhed all they were ever intended and deſigned for, when they ſhall have reconciled to God all the number of his Elect that lay diſperſed among the loſt and miſerable poſterity of *Adam*, and have brought them home to Chriſt in a perfect ſtate, *Eph.* 4. 12. &c.

Secondly, It implies the ſingular grace and admirable condeſcenſion of God to ſinful man. That God will admit any treaty with him at all is wonderful mercy, it's more than he would do for the Angles that fell, *Jude* 6. they are *reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs unto the judgement of the great day.* Chriſt took not on him their nature, but ſuffered Myriads of them to periſh, and fills up their vacant places in glory with a number of ſinful men and women to whom the Law a warded the ſame puniſhment.

But that God will not only treat but entreat and beſeech ſinful men to be reconciled is yet more wonderful. Barely to propound the terms of peace had been an aſtoniſhing mercy, but to wooe and beſeech ſtubborn enemies to be at peace and accept their pardon, Oh how unparallell'd is this condeſcenſion!

Inter illos qui regi regum inſerviunt, Legatiſumus: Dei Chriſtique perſonam gerimus, nullus unquam nos impune deſpicatui habuit, quin in Deum Chriſtumque idem injurius. Eowles præfat ad paſt. Evang.

Thirdly, It implyes the great dignity and honour of the Goſpel miniſtry. *We are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*, Ambaſſadors repreſent and perſonate the Prince that ſends them: and the honours or contempts done to them reflect upon, and are reckon'd to the perſon of their Maſter, *Luke* 10. 16. he that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me.

Neither their perſons, nor parts are the proper ground and reaſon of our reſpects to them; but their office and Commiſſion from *Jeſus Chriſt.*

We

We are fallen into the dreggs of time, wherein a vile contempt is poured not only upon the *perſons* but the very *Office* of the Miniſtry: and I could heartily wiſh that Scripture, *Mal.* 2. 7, 8, 9. were throughly conſidered by us, poſſibly it might inform us of the true cauſe and reaſon of this ſore judgement: but ſurely Chriſts faithful Miniſters deſerve a better entertainment than they ordinarily find in the world: and if we did but ſeriouſly bethink our ſelves, in whoſe name they come, and in whoſe ſtead they ſtand, we ſhould receive them as the *Galatians* did *Paul*, *Gal.* 4. 14. as Angels of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.

Fourthly, Chriſts treating with ſinners by his Miniſters, who are his Ambaſſadors, implies the ſtrict obligation they are under to be faithful in their Miniſterial imployment. Chriſt counts upon their faithfulneſs whom he puts into the Miniſtry, 1 *Tim.* 1. 12. They are accountable to him for all acts of their office, *Heb.* 13. 17. If they be ſilent, they cannot be innocent: *neceſſity is laid upon them, and wo to them if they preach not the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. 9. 16.

Yea, neceſſity is not only laid upon them to preach, but to keep cloſe to their Commiſſion in preaching the Goſpel, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *Our Exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanneſs, nor in guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing men, but God, which trieth our hearts*: the word is not to be corrupted to pleaſe men, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. their buſineſs is not to make them their diſciples, but Chriſts, not to ſeek theirs but them, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. to keep cloſe to their inſtructions, both in the matter, manner, & end of their Miniſtry. So did Chriſt himſelf the treaſure of wiſdom and knowledge, yet being ſent by God, he ſaith, *Joh.* 7. 16. *my doctrine is not mine, but his that ſent me.* And ſo he expects and requires that his *Ambaſſadors* keep cloſe to the Commiſſion he hath given them; and be (according to their meaſure) faithful to their truſt, as he was to his. *Paul* is to deliver to the people, that which he alſo received from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. And *Timothy* muſt keep that which was committed to him, 2 *Tim.* 1. 14.

Fifthly, It implies the removal of the Goſpel miniſtry to be a very great judgment to the people. The remanding of *Ambaſſadors*, preſages an enſuing War. If the reconciling of ſouls to God be the greateſt work, then the removal of

the means and instruments thereof must be the soreſt Judgement. Some account *the falling of the Salt upon the Table ominous*, but surely the falling of them whom Christ calls *the Salt of the earth* is so indeed.

What are those once famous and renowned places from whence Christ (as he threatned) hath removed the Candlestick, but *magna latrocinia* dens of Robbers, and mountains of prey?

Sixthly and Lastly, It implyes both the wisdome and condescension of God to sinful men in carrying on a treaty of peace with them by such *Ambassadors*, negotiating betwixt him and them: without a treaty there would be no reconciliation; and no method to carry on such a treaty like this: for had the Lord treated with sinners personally, and immediately, they had been overwhelmed with such an awful Majesty. The appearances of God confound the creature, *Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God* (saith Israel) *neither let me see this great fire any more, that I dye not: yea so terrible was that sight, that* Moses *said, I exceedingly fear and quake*, Deut. 18. 16. *Heb.* 12. 21.

Or had he Commissionated *Angels* for this imployment, though they stand not at such an infinite distance from us as God doth, yet such is the excellence of their glory (being the highest *Species* and order of creatures) that their appearances would be more apt to astonish than perswade us: besides they being creatures of another rank and kinde, and not partaking with us either in the misery of the fall, or benefit of the recovery by Christ, 'tis not to be supposed they should speak to us so feelingly, and experimentally, as these his Ministers do: they can open to you the mysteries of sin, feeling the workings thereof daily in their own hearts: they can discover to you the conflicts of the flesh and spirit, as being daily exercised in that warfare; and then being men of the same mould and temper they can say to you as *Elihu* did to *Job*, *Chap.* 33. 6, 7. *Behold, I am according to thy wish, in Gods stead, I also am formed out of the clay: behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.*

So that in this appointment much of the Divine wisdom and condescension to sinners is manifested: *we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God,*

and

and not of us, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. Gods glory and mans advantage are both promoted in this dispensation.

Secondly, Next we are to consider that great Concernment about which these *Ambassadors* of Christ are to treat with sinners: and that (as the Text informs us) is their reconciliation to God. 2.

Now reconciliation with God, is the restoring of men to that former friendship they had with God, which was broken by the fall, and is still continued by our Enmity and aversation, whilst we continue in our Natural, and unregenerate Estate. Now this is the greatest and most blessed design that ever God had in the world: an astonishing and invaluable mercy to men, as will clearly appear by considering these particulars following.

Reconciliare nihil aliud est quam amicitiam offensione aliqua gravi diremptam resarcire, & sic inimicos in pristinam concordiam reducere. Daven. in 1 Col. 20.

First, That God should be reconciled after such a dreadful breach as the fall of man made, is wonderful: No sin, all things considered, was ever like to this sin: other sins like a single bullet kill particular persons, but this like a chain-shot cuts off multitudes, multitudes as the sand upon the sea shore which no man can number.

If all the posterity of *Adam* in their several generations should do nothing else but bewail and lament this sin of his whilst this world continues, yet would it not be enough lamented: for a man so newly Created out of nothing, and admitted the first moment into the highest order, Crowned a King over the works of Gods hands, *Psal.* 8. 5. a man perfect and upright, without the least inordinate motion, or sinful inclination: A man whose minde was most clear, bright and apprehensive of the will of God, whose will was free, and able to have easily put by the strongest temptation: A man in a paradise of delights, where nothing was left to desire for advancing the happiness of soul or body: A man understanding himself to be a publick complexive person, carrying not only his own, but the happiness of the whole world in his hand: so soon, upon so slight a temptation, to violate the Law of his God, and involve himself and all his posterity with him in such a gulph of guilt and misery: all which he might so easily have prevented! O wonderful amazing mercy, that ever God should think of being reconciled, or have any purposes of peace towards so vile an Apostate creature as man!

Secondly, That God ſhould be reconciled to *men* and not to *Angels*, a more high and excellent order of creatures, is yet more aſtoniſhing: when the Angels fell they were loſt irrecoverably: no hand of mercy was ſtretched out to ſave one of thoſe *Myriads* of excellent beings, but chains of darkneſs were immediately clapt on them, to reſerve them to the judgment of the great day, *Jude v.* 6.

That the milder attribute ſhould be exerciſed to the inferiour, and the ſeverer attribute to the more excellent Creature, is juſt matter for eternal admiration: who would caſt away veſſels of gold, and ſave earthen potſherds! Some indeed undertake to ſhew us the reaſons why the wiſdom of God made no proviſion for the recovery of *Angels* by a *Mediator* of reconciliation: partly from the high degree of the malignity of their ſin, who ſinned in the light of heaven, partly becauſe it was decent that the firſt breach of the Divine Law ſhould be puniſhed, to ſecure obedience for the future. And beſides, the Angelical nature was not entirely loſt, *Myriads* of *Angels* ſtill continuing in their innocency and glory: whenas all mankind was loſt in *Adam*.

But we muſt remember ſtill the Law made no diſtinction, but awarded the ſame puniſhment, and therefore it was mercy alone that made the difference, and mercy for ever to be admired by men: how aſtoniſhing is the grace of God, that moves in a way of reconciliation to us, out of deſign to fill up the vacant places in heaven from which Angels fell, with ſuch poor worms as we are! Angels excluded, and men received. O ſtupendious mercy!

Thirdly, That God ſhould be *wholly* and *throughly* reconciled to men, ſo that no fury remains in him againſt us; according to that Scripture *Iſai.* 27. 4. is ſtill matter of farther wonder. The deſign he ſends his *Ambaſſadors* to you about is not the allaying, and mitigating of his wrath, (which yet would be matter of great joy to the damned) but throughly to quench all his wrath, ſo that no degree thereof ſhall ever be felt by you. O bleſſed Embaſſy! *Beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring ſuch tydings.* God offers you a full reconciliation, a plenary remiſſion.

Fourthly, That God ſhould be *freely* reconciled to ſinners and diſcharge them without any the leaſt ſatisfaction to his juſtice

juſtice from them; is and for ever will be marvellous in their eyes.

Oh what mercy would the damned account it if after a thouſand years torments in hell God would at laſt be reconciled to them, and put an end to their miſery! But believers are diſcharged without bearing any part of the curſe, not one farthing of that debt is levied upon them.

If you ſay, how can this be, when God ſtands upon full ſatisfaction to his Juſtice before any ſoul be diſcharged, and reſtored to favour? freely reconciled, and yet fully ſatisfied, how can this be? *Object.*

Very well, for this mercy comes freely to your hands, how coſtly ſoever it proved to Chriſt: and that free remiſſion, and full ſatisfaction are not contradictory and inconſiſtent things, is plain enough from that Scripture, *Rom.* 3. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*: freely and yet in the way of redemption. *Solut.*

For though Chriſt your ſurety have made ſatisfaction in your name and ſtead, yet it was his life, his blood, and not yours, that went for it, and this ſurety was of Gods own appointment and providing without your contrivement or thoughts. O bleſſed reconciliation, happy is the people that hear the joyful ſound of it.

Fifthly, and Laſtly, That God ſhould be finally reconciled to ſinners, ſo that never any new breach ſhall happen betwixt him and them any more, ſo as to diſſolve the League of friendſhip; is a moſt raviſhing and tranſporting meſſage.

Two things give Confirmation and full ſecurity to reconciled ones, *viz.* The terms of the Covenant, and the interceſſion of the Mediator.

The Covenant of grace gives great ſecurity to believers againſt new breaches betwixt God and them. It's ſaid *Jer.* 32. 40. *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts that they ſhall not depart from me.* The fear of God is a choice preſervative againſt ſecond revolts, and therefore taken into the Covenant. It is no *hindrance*, but a ſpecial *guard* to aſſurance.

There is no doubt of Gods faithfulneſs, that part of the promiſe is eaſily believed, that he will not turn away from

us to do us good, all the doubt is of the inconstancy of our hearts with God, and against that danger this promise makes provision.

Moreover the *Intercession* of Christ in heaven secures the Saints in their reconciled state. 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation*: he continually appears in heaven before the Father, *as a Lamb that had been slain*, *Rev.* 5. 6. And as the *bow* in the clouds, *Rev.* 4. 3. So that as long as Christ thus appears in the presence of God for us, it is not possible our state of Justification and reconciliation can be again dissolved.

And this is that blessed *Embassy* Gospel Ministers are imployed about: he hath committed to them the word of this reconciliation.

3. In the last place we are to enquire what and whence is this efficacy of preaching, to reconcile and bring home sinners to Christ.

That its efficacy is great in convincing, humbling, and changing the hearts of men is past all debate and question. *The weapons of our warfare* (saith the Apostle) *are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. No heart so hard, no conscience so stupid, but this sword can pierce and wound: in an instant it can cast down all those vain reasonings, and fond imaginations which the Carnal heart hath been building all its life long, and open a fair passage for Convictions of sin, and the fears and terrors of wrath to come into that heart that was never afraid of these things before. So *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this they were pricked to the heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

What shall we do? is the doleful cry of men at their wits end: the voice of one in deepest distress, and such outcries have been no rarities under the preaching of the word: its power hath been felt by persons of all orders and conditions: the great and honourable of the earth, as well as the poor and despicable. The learned and the ignorant, the civil and profane,

sane, the young and the old, all have felt the heart-piercing efficacy of the Gospel.

If you ask whence hath the word preached this mighty power? The answer must be, Neither from it self, nor him that preaches it, but from the spirit of God whose instrument it is, by whose blessing and concurrence with it, it produceth its blessed effects upon the hearts of men.

First, This Efficacy and wonderful power is not from the word it self: take it in an abstract notion, separated from the spirit, it can do nothing: it is called *the foolishness of preaching*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. foolishness not only because the world so accounts it, but because in it self it is a weak and unsuitable, and therefore a very improbable way to reconcile the world to God: that the stony heart of one man should be broken by the words of another man, that one poor sinful Creature should be used to breath spiritual life into another, this could never be if this sword were not managed by an omnipotent hand. 1.

And besides, we know what works Naturally, works necessarily: if this Efficacy were inherent in the word, so that we should suppose it to work as other Natural agents do, then it must need convert all to whom it is at any time preached, except its effect were miraculously hindered, as the fire when it could not burn the three Children: but alas thousands hear it, that never feel the saving power of it, *Isai.* 53. 1. and 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.

Secondly, It derives not this Efficacy from the *Instrument* by which it is ministred: let their gifts and abilities be what they will, it's impossible that ever such effects should be produced from the strength of their Natural or gracious abilities: 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. *We have this treasure* (saith the Apostle) *in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* 2.

This treasure of Gospel-light is carried ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν *in earthen vessels*, as *Gideon* and his men had their Lamps in earthen pitchers or in *Oyster-shells*, for so the word also signifies, the *Oyster-shell* is a base and worthless thing in it self, however, there lyes the rich and precious *Pearl* of so great value: and why is this precious treasure lodged in such weak worthless vessels? surely it is upon no other design but to convince ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν

vince us of the truth I am here to prove, That the Excellency of the power is of God, and not of us: as it follows in the next words. To the ſame purpoſe ſpeaks the ſame Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increaſe.*

Not any thing! what can be more diminutively ſpoken of the Goſpel preachers? but we muſt not underſtand theſe words in a ſimple and *abſolute*, but in a *comparative* and relative ſence: not as if they were not neceſſary and uſeful in their place, but that how neceſſary ſoever they be, and what excellent gifts ſoever God hath furniſhed them with; yet it is neither in their power, nor choice to make the word they preach effectual to men: if it were, then the damnation of all that hear us muſt needs lye at our door: then alſo, many thouſands would have been reconciled to God, which are yet in the ſtate of enmity, but the effect of the Goſpel is not in our power.

3. Thirdly, But whatever efficacy it hath to reconcile men to God, it derives from the ſpirit of God, whoſe Cooperation and bleſſing (which is arbitrarily diſpenſed) gives it all the fruit it hath.

* Mr. Anthony Burges. Miniſters, ſaith one *, are like Trumpets which make no ſound, if breath be not breathed into them. Or like *Ezekiels* wheels, which move not, unleſs the ſpirit move them: or like *Eliſha's* ſervant, whoſe preſence doth no good except *Eliſha's* ſpirit be there alſo: for want of the ſpirit of God, how many thouſands of ſouls do find the Miniſtry to be nothing to them? If it be *ſomething* to the purpoſe to any ſoul, it is the Lord that makes it ſo. This ſpirit is not limited by mens gifts or parts: he concurrs not only with their labours who have excellent gifts, but oftentimes bleſſes mean deſpicable gifts, with far greater ſucceſs: beautiful *Rachel* is barren, and blear-ey'd *Leah* bears children.

Ex duobus ætate jam grandibus impiis; cur iſte ita vocetur ut vocantem ſequatur, ille autem non? nolito judicare, ſi non vis errare: inſcrutabilia ſunt judica dei: cujus vult miſeretur. Aug. de bono perſec. Cap. 8.

Suppoſe, ſaith *Auſtin*, there be two Conduits in a Town, one very plain and homely, the other built of poliſhed marble, and adorned with excellent Images, as Eagles, Lions, Angels: the water refreſhes as it is water, and not as it comes from ſuch or ſuch a Conduit. 'Tis the ſpirit that gives the

word

word all that vertue it hath: he is the Lord of all saving influences: he hath dominion over the *word*, over our *souls*, over the *times* and seasons of conversion: and if any poor Creature attend the Ministry without benefit, if he go away as he came, without fruit; surely we may say in this case as *Martha* said to *Christ* in reference to her brother *Lazarus*, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not dy'd; so, Lord if thou hadst been in this prayer, in this Sermon, this poor soul had not gone dead, and carnal from under it. And now what remains, but that we apply this truth in those uses that it gives us?

First Use of Information.

Is the Preaching of the Gospel by Christs *Ambassadors* the way which God takes to reconcile sinners to himself? *Then how inexcusable are all those that continue in their state of enmity, though the Ambassadors of peace have been with them all their lives long, wooing and beseeching them to be reconciled to God?* *Infer.* 1.

O invincible, obstinate, incurable disease, which is aggravated by the only proper remedy! hath God been wooing and beseeching you by his *Ambassadours* so many years to be reconciled to him, and will you not yield to any intreaties? must he be made to speak in vain, to charm the deaf *Adder*? well, when the milder Attributre hath done with you, the severer Attribute will take you in hand.

The Lord hath kept an account of every year and day of his patience towards you, *Luke* 13. 7. *These three years I came seeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and finde none*, and *Jer.* 25. 3. *These three and twenty years have I spoken unto you rising early and speaking, but ye have not hearkened.*

Well, be you assured, that God hath both the glass of your time, and the vials of his wrath by him: and so much of his abused patience as runs out of one, so much of his incensed wrath runs into the other: there is a time when this Treaty of peace will end, when the Master of the house will rise up, and the doors be shut, *Luke* 13. 25. Then will you be left without hope and without Apology.

We read indeed of some poor and ineffectual pleas that will be made by some at the last day, so *Matth.* 7. 22. *We have Prophesied in thy name, &c.* These pleas will not avail, but as

for you what will you plead? poſſibly many thouſand *Ideots* or poor weak-headed perſons may periſh, many young ones that had little or no time in the world to acquaint themſelves with matters of religion, or underſtand the way of ſalvation: many Millions of heathens, that never heard the name of Chriſt, nor came within the ſound of Salvation; who will yet periſh and that juſtly.

Now whatſoever Apologies any of theſe will make for themſelves in the laſt day, to be ſure you can make none. God hath given you a Capacity, and competent underſtanding: many of you are wiſe and ſubtil in all your other concernments, and only ſhew your folly in the great concernments of your Salvation: you cannot plead want of time, ſome of you are grown gray-headed under the Goſpel: you cannot plead want of means and opportunities, the Ordinances and Miniſters of Chriſt have been with you all your life long to this day: ſure if you be *Chriſtleſs* now, you muſt alſo be *ſpeechleſs* then.

Infer. 2.

Infer. 2. Hence it alſo follows, *That the world owes better entertainment than it gives to the Miniſters of Chriſt. Chriſts Ambaſſadors deſerve a better welcome than they find among men.*

Your reſpects to them is founded upon their office and imployment for you, *Heb.* 13. 17. and 1 *Theſ.* 5. 12. They watch for your ſouls, dare any of you watch for their ruine? They bring glad tydings, ſhall they return with ſad tydings to him that ſent them? They publiſh peace, ſhall they be rewarded with trouble? O ungrateful world! We read in *Eph.* 6. 20. of an *Ambaſſador in bonds*, and he no ordinary one neither; we read alſo a ſtrange Challenge made by another at his own death, *Acts* 7. 52. *Which of all the prophets have not your fathers perſecuted? And they have ſlain them which ſhewed before the coming of the Juſt one.* Some that break the bread of life to you might want bread to eat for any regard you have to them. The office of the Miniſtry ſpeaks the abundant love of God to you, your Contempt and abuſe of it ſpeaks the abundant ſtupidity or malignity of your hearts towards God: what a ſad proteſta-

tion

tion doth *Jeremy* make against his ungrateful people, *Jer.* 18. 20. *shall evil*, saith he, *be recompenced for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul; remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.*

Gods *mercy* is eminently discovered in the *institution*, and Satans *malice* is eminently discovered in the *opposition* of the Ministerial office. Satan is a great and jealous Prince, and it is no wonder he should raise all the forces he can to oppose the *Ambassadors* of Christ: When, saith one, the Gospel comes into his dominions, it doth as it were by sound of Trumpet and beat of drum proclaim liberty to all his slaves and vassals if they will quit that Tyrant that hath so long held their souls in bondage, and come under the sweet and easy government of Christ: and can the Devil endure this, think you? if Christ send forth *Ambassadors*, no wonder if Satan send forth *opposers*: he certainly owes them a spite, that undermine his government in the world. Mr. *Gurnals Christian Armor.*

Infer. 3.

Hence it follows, *that it nearly concerns all Christs Ambassadors to see that they be in a state of reconciliation with God themselves.* *Infer.* 3.

Shall we stand in Christ's stead by *office*, and yet not be in Christ by Union? Shall we intreat men to be reconciled to God, and yet be at enmity with him our selves? O let us take heed *lest after we have preached to others, we our selves be as cast-awayes*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. Of all men living we are the most miserable if we be Christless, and graceless: our Consciences will make more terrible applications of our doctrine to us in hell, than ever we made to the vilest of sinners on earth. O it's far easier to study and press a thousand truths upon others, than to feel the power of one truth upon our own hearts: to teach others *facienda quàm facienda*: duties to be done, than duties by doing them.

They are sad *Dilamma's* with which a learned Writer poses such graceless Ministers: If Sin be evil, why do you live in it? If it be not, why do you dissuade men from it? If it be dangerous, how dare you venture on it? If it be not, why do you tell men so? If Gods threatenings be true, why don't you *Gildas Salv. p.* 15, 16.

fear them? If they be false, why do you trouble men needlesly with them, and put them into such frights without a cause?

Take heed to your selves, lest you should cry down sin, and not overcome it; lest while you seek to bring it down in others, you bow to it and become its slaves your selves: it's easier to chide at sin, than to overcome it. That is a smart question, *Rom.* 2. 21. *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* A prophane Minister was Converted by reading that Text once, but how many have read it as well as he, who never trembled at the consideration of it as he did?

2. *Use for Conviction.*

2. *Use.* Is this the method God uses to reconcile men to himself? O then examine your selves whether yet the preaching of the Gospel hath reconciled you to God. It's too manifest that many among us are in the state of enmity unto this day: we may say with the Prophet *Isaiah*, 53. 1. *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* We offer you peace upon Gospel terms and Articles, but our peace returns to us again: enemies you were to God, and enemies you still continue. The Evidence is undeniable; for

1. *Evidence.*

1. *Evid.* Many of you were *never Convinced* to this day of your state of enmity against God, and without Conviction of this, reconciliation is impossible; without repentance there can be no reconciliation, and without Conviction there can be no repentance: when we repent we lay down our Weapons, *Isai.* 27. 4, 5. But how few have been brought to this? Alas! if a few poor cold heartless, ineffectual confessions of sin may pass for a due Conviction, and serious repentance, then have we been convinced, then have we repented: but you will find if ever the Lord intend to reconcile you to himself, your Convictions and humiliations for sin will be other manner of things: this will cost you more than a few cheap words against sin. 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of your*

your selves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge?

2. *Evidence.*

Many of us *never treated* seriously with the Lord about peace, and how then are we reconciled to him? What, a peace without a treaty? Reconciliation without any consideration about it? it can never be: When was the time, and where was the place, that you were found in secret upon your knees, mourning over the sin of your Nature, and the evils of your ways? Certainly you must be brought to this, you must with a broken heart bewail your sin and misery. 2. *Evid.*

Friend, that stony heart of thine must feel remorse and anguish for sin, it will cost thee some sad days and sorrowful nights or ever thou canst have peace with God: it will cost thee many a groan, many a tear, many a hearty cry to heaven; if ever the peace be made betwixt God and thee, thou must take with thee words and turn to the Lord, saying, Take away all iniquity, and receive me graciously. O for one smile, one token of love, one hint of favour! The child of peace is not born without pangs, and agonies of Soul.

3. *Evidence.*

Many of us are *not reconciled* to the duties of religion, and ways of holiness, and how then is it possible we should be reconciled to God? What, reconciled to God, and unreconciled to the ways of God? By reconciliation we are *made nigh*: in duties of Communion we *draw nigh*; and can we be made nigh to God, and have no heart to draw nigh to God? it can never be. 3. *Evid.*

Examine your hearts and say, is not the way of strictness a bondage to you? had you not rather be at liberty to fulfill the desires of the flesh and of the mind? Could you not wish that the Scriptures had not made some things else your sins and other things your duties? do you delight in the Law of God after the inner man, and *esteem his Judgments concerning all things to be right?* Do you love secret prayer, and de-

light in duties of Communion with God; or rather are they not an ungrateful burden, and irksome imposition? give Conscience leave to speak plain.

4. *Evidence.*

4. *Evid.* Many of us are *not Enemies* to sin, and how then are we reconciled to God? what, friends with God, and our Lusts too? it cannot be. *Psal.* 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord hate evil*: the same hour our reconciliation is made with God, there is an everlasting breach made with sin: this is one of the Articles or Conditions of our peace with God, *Isai.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

But it's manifest in many of us that we are no enemies to sin, we secretly indulge it, what bad names soever we call it by: we will commit ten sins to cover one: we cannot endure the most serious faithful, seasonable, private, tender, and necessary reproofs of Sin, but our hearts swell and rise at it: sure we are not reconciled to God, whilest we embrace sin his enemy in our bosoms.

5. *Evidence.*

5. *Evid.* We *love not the Children of God*, nor are reconciled to them that bear his Image, and how then can we be reconciled to God? 1 *Joh.* 5. 1. *He that loveth him that begat, loveth them also that are begotten*: what, at peace with the father, and at War with the children! It cannot be: do not some that hope they have made their peace with God, hate, revile and persecute the Children of God? Surely in that day we are reconciled to the Lord, we are reconciled to all his people: we shall then love a Christian as a Christian, and by this we know we are passed from death to life.

6. *Evidence.*

6. *Evidence.*

Lastly, How can any man think himself to be reconciled to God, who *never closed heartily with Jesus Christ* by faith, who is the only dayes-man, and peace-maker; the alone mediator of reconciliation betwixt God and man. 6. *Evid.*

This is a sure truth, that all whom God accepts into favour, are *made accepted in the beloved, Eph.* 1.6. If any man will make peace with God, he must take hold of his strength, accept and close with Christ who is the power of God, or he can never make peace, *Isai.* 27. He must be made nigh by the blood of Christ, *Eph.* 2. 13. But alas, both Christ and faith are strangers to many souls who yet perswade themselves to be at peace with God: O fatal mistake!

3. *Use of Exhortation.*

Lastly, This point deserves a close vigorous application in a threefold exhortation. 3. *Use.*

First, To Christs Ambassadors who treat with Souls in order to their reconciliation with God

Secondly, To those that are yet in their enmity and unreconciled state.

Thirdly, to those that have embraced the terms of peace, and submitted to the Gospel overtures.

First, *To the Ambassadors of reconciliation.* God hath put a great deal of honour upon you in this high and noble imployment: great is the dignity of your office, to some you are *the savour of death unto death, and to others the savour of life unto life; and who is sufficient for these things?* 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. But yet the *Duty* is no less than the dignity. O what manner of men should we be for judgement, seriousness, affections, patience, and exemplary holiness to whom the management of so great a Concern betwixt God and man is committed! 1.

First, for *Judgment* and prudence, how necessary is it in so weighty and difficult a business as this! He had need be a man of wisdom that is to inform the ignorant of the nature and necessity of this great work, and win over their hearts to consent

conſent to the Articles of peace propounded in the Goſpel; that hath ſo many ſubtil temptations to anſwer, and ſo many intricate caſes of conſcience to reſolve: There are many ſtrong holds of Satan to be battered, and many ſtout and obſtinate reſiſtances made by the hearts of ſinners which muſt be overcome; and he had need be no *Novice* in religion to whom ſo difficult a province is committed.

Secondly, Let us be *Serious* in our work as well as judicious. Remember O ye *Ambaſſadors* of Chriſt, you bring a meſſage from the God of heaven of everlaſting conſequence to the ſouls of men. The eternal decrees are executed upon them in your Miniſtry: to ſome you are the *ſavour of life unto life, and to ſome the ſavour of death unto death*, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. Heaven and hell are matters of moſt awful and ſolemn Conſideration. O what an account have we alſo ſhortly to give unto him that ſent us!

Theſe are matters of ſuch deep Concernment as ſhould ſwallow up our very ſpirits, the leaſt they can do is to compoſe our hearts unto ſerioufneſs in the management of them.

Vide Bowles *paſtor Evang. p.* 136.

Thirdly, Be filled with tender affections toward the ſouls of men with whom you treat for reconciliation: you had need be men of *bowels* as well as men of *brains*: you ſee a multitude of poor ſouls upon the brink of eternal miſery, and they know it not, but promiſe themſelves peace, and fill themſelves with vain hopes of heaven: and is there a more moving, melting ſpectacle in the world than this! O think with what bowels of Commiſeration *Moſes* and *Paul* were filled, when the one deſired rather to be blotted out of Gods Book, and the other to be accurſed from Chriſt, than that *Iſrael* ſhould not be ſaved, *Exod.* 32. 33. and *Rom.* 9. 3. Think how the Bowels of Chriſt yearned over *Jeruſalem*, *Matth.* 23. 37. and over the multitude, *Matth.* 9. 36. Let the ſame mind be in you which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus.

Fourthly, Be *patient* and long-ſuffering towards ſinners: ſuch is the value of one ſoul, that it's worth waiting all our days to ſave it at laſt: *the ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing them that oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them repentance*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25. The Lord waits with patience

patience upon ſinners, and well may you. Conſider your ſelves, how long was God treating with you, ere you were won to him? Be not diſcouraged if ſucceſs preſently anſwer not expectation.

Fifthly, and Laſtly, be ſure to back your Exhortations with drawing *examples*, elſe you may preach out your laſt breath before you gain one ſoul to God. The Devil and the Carnal hearts of your hearers will put hinderances enough in the way of your labours, don't you put the greateſt of all your ſelves. O ſtudy not only to preach exactly, but to live exactly, let the miſplacing of one action in your lives trouble you more, than the miſplacing of words in your diſcourſes: this is the way to ſucceed in your Embaſſy, and give up your account with joy.

Secondly, The exhortation ſpeaks to all thoſe that are yet in a ſtate of enmity and unreconciled to God unto this day. O that may words might prevail, and that you would now be intreated to be reconciled to God! The *Ambaſſadors* of peace are yet with you, the *treaty* is not yet ended, the Maſter of the houſe is not yet riſen up, nor the door of mercy and hope finally ſhut: hitherto God hath waited to be gracious, O that the long-ſuffering of God might be your ſalvation: a day is haſting when God will treat with you no more, when *a gulph ſhall be fixed* betwixt him and you for ever, *Luk.* 13. 25. O what will you do when the ſeaſon of mercy and all hopes of mercy ſhall end together! When God ſhall become inacceſſible, inexorable and unreconcilable to you for evermore. 2.

O what wilt thou do when thou ſhalt find thy ſelf ſhut up under eternal wrath: when thou ſhalt feel that miſery thou art now warned of! is this the place where I muſt be, are theſe the torments I muſt endure, what for ever! Yea, for ever: will not God be ſatisfied with the ſufferings of a thouſand years? No, nor of Millions of years! Ah ſinners, did you but clearly ſee the preſent and future miſery of unreconciled ones, and what that wrath of the great and terrible God is which is coming as faſt as the wings of time can bring it upon you; it would certainly drive you to Chriſt, or drive you out of your wits.

O 'tis a dreadful thing to have God for your eternal enemy: to have the great and terrible God setting on work his infinite power to avenge the abuse of his grace and mercy.

Believe it friends, it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God: knowing the terrors of the Lord we perswade men: an eternal weight hangs upon an inch of time. O that you did know the time of your visitation! That you would not dare to adventure, and run the hazard of one day more in an unreconciled state.

3. Thirdly, and Lastly, This point speaks to those who have believed our report, who have taken hold of Gods strength, and made peace with him: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy: who once were afar off, but now are made nigh by the blood of Christ: with you I would leave a few words of exhortation, and I have done.

First, *Admire and stand amaz'd at this mercy. I will praise thee O Lord,* (saith the Church *Isai.* 12. 1.) *though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.* O how overwhelming a mercy is here before you! God is at peace, at peace with you that were *enemies in your minds by wicked works, Colos.* 1. 21. at peace with you, and at enmity with Millions as good by nature as you: at peace with you that sought it not: at peace for ever, no dissolving this friendship for evermore. O let this Consideration thaw your hearts before the Lord and make you cry, What am I Lord that mercy should take in me, and shut out fallen Angels, and millions of men and women as capable of mercy as my self! O the riches! O the depths of the mercy and goodness of God!

Secondly, *Beware of New breaches with God*: God will speak *peace to his people and to his Saints, but let not them return any more to folly, Psal.* 85. 8. What if this state of friendship can never be *dissolved*, yet it is a dreadful thing to have it *clouded*: you may lose the sense of peace, and with it all the joy of your hearts and comforts of your lives in this world.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Labour to reconcile others to God*, Especially those that are endeared to you by the bonds of Natural relation: When *Paul* was reconciled to God himself, his heart was full of heavines for others that were not reconciled, for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, *Rom.* 9. 2, 3. When *Abraham* was become Gods friend himself, then, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* *Gen.* 17. 18.

Fourthly and Lastly, *let your reconciliation with God relieve you under all burdens of affliction you shall meet with in your way to heaven*: let them that are at enmity with God droop under Crosses and afflictions, but don't you do so. *Tranquillus deus tranquillat omnia.* *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3. Let the peace of God keep your hearts and minds. As nothing can comfort a man that must to Hell at last, so nothing should deject a man that shall through many troubles win heaven at last.

The Fourth SERMON.

Serm. 4.

Joh. 6. 44.

No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him.

Explaining the work of the Spirit, as the internal & moſt effectual means of the Application of Chriſt.

OUR laſt diſcourſe informed you of the uſefulneſs & influence of the preaching of the Goſpel in order to the *Application* of Chriſt to the ſouls of men: there muſt be (in Gods Ordinary way) the external miniſterial offer of Chriſt, before men can have Union with him.

But yet all the preaching in the world can never effect this Union with Chriſt, in it ſelf, and in its own vertue, except a ſupernatural and mighty power go forth with it for that end and purpoſe. Let *Boanerges* and *Barnabas* try their ſtrength, let the *Angels* of heaven be the preachers; till God draw, the ſoul cannot come to Chriſt.

No ſaving benefit is to be had by Chriſt without Union with his perſon, no Union with his perſon without faith, no faith ordinarily wrought without the preaching of the Goſpel by Chriſts *Ambaſſadors*, their preaching hath no ſaving efficacy without Gods drawings; as will evidently appear by

by conſidering theſe words and the occaſion of them.

The occaſion of theſe words is found (as Learned *Cameron* well obſerves) in the 42. *verſe*. *And they ſaid, Is not this Jeſus the ſon of Joſeph, whoſe Father and Mother we know?* Chriſt had been preſſing upon them in his miniſtry the great and neceſſary duty of faith, but notwithſtanding the *Authority* of the preacher, the *holineſs* of his life, the *miracles* by which he confirmed his *doctrine*, they ſtill objected againſt him, *is not this the Carpenters Son?* from whence Chriſt takes the occaſion of theſe words: *No man can come unto me except my Father which hath ſent me draw him*: q. d. In vain is the Authority of my perſon urged, in vain are all the miracles wrought in your ſight to confirm the doctrine preached to you, till that ſecret almighty power of the Spirit be put forth upon your hearts, you will not, you cannot come unto me. *Camironis Myrothec.* p. 139.

The words are a Negative propoſition.

In which the Author and powerful manner of divine operation in working faith are contained: there muſt be drawing before believing, and that drawing muſt be the drawing of God: every word hath its weight, we will conſider them in the order they lye in the Text.

Οὐδεὶς——*No man*] not one, let his Natural qualifications be what they will, let his external advantages in reſpect of means and helps be never ſo great: it is not in the power of any man: all perſons in all ages need the ſame power of God, one as well as another: every man is alike dead, impotent, and averſe to faith in his Natural Capacity. No man, or—— not one, among all the ſons of men.

Δύναται—— *Can*] or is able: he ſpeaks of impotency to ſpecial and ſaving actions, ſuch as believing in Chriſt is: no act that is ſaving can be done without the concurrence of ſpecial grace. Other acts that have a remote tendency to it, are performed by a more general concourſe and common aſſiſtance, ſo men may come to the word, and attend what is ſpoken, remember, and conſider what the word tells them; but as to believing or coming to Chriſt, that no man can do of himſelf, or by a general and common aſſiſtance. No man can

ἐλθεῖν

ἐλθεῖν πρός με, ——*come unto me*] (*i. e.*) believe in me unto Salvation. Coming to Christ, and believing in him are terms *equipollent*, and are indifferently used to express the nature of saving faith, as is plain from *ver.* 35. *he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*: it notes the terms from which, and to which the soul moves, and the voluntariness of the motion, notwithstanding that divine power by which the will is drawn to Christ.

ἐὰν μὴ ὁ πατὴρ —— *Except my Father*] not excluding the other two persons, for every work of God relating to the Creatures is common to all the three persons, nor only to note that the Father is the first in order of working: but the reason is hinted in the next words,

ὁ πέμψας με —— *who hath sent me*] God having entred into Covenant with the son and sent him, stands obliged by that *paction* to bring the promised seed to him, and that he doth by drawing them to Christ by faith: so the next words tell us the Father doth

ἑλκύσῃ αὐτὸν —— *draw him*] that is powerfully and effectually incline his will to come to Christ: not by a violent coaction, but by a benevolent bending of the will which was averse; and as it is not in the way of force and compulsion, so neither is it by a simple *moral suasion*, by the bare proposal of an object to the will, and so leaving the sinner to his own election, but it is such a persuasion as hath a mighty overcoming efficacy accompanying it: of which more anon.

Non violenta coactio immediata, sed voluntatis à deo aaverſæ benevola flectio. Glaſ. Rhet. Sacra. p. 256.

The words thus opened the Observation will be this:

Doct.

Doct.

That it is utterly impossible for any man to come to Jesus Christ unless he be drawn unto him by the special and mighty power of God.

No man is compelled to come to Christ against his will, he that cometh, comes willingly, but even that will and desire to come is the effect of grace: *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is God that worketh in you both to will, and to do, of his own good pleasure.*

If

If we deſire the help and aſſiſtance of grace (ſaith *Fulgentius*) even the deſire is of grace; grace muſt firſt be ſhed forth upon us before we can begin to deſire it: *by grace are ye ſaved through faith, and that not of your ſelves, it is the gift of God, Eph.* 2. 8. ſuppoſe the utmoſt degree of natural ability, let a man be as much diſpoſed and prepared as nature can diſpoſe or prepare him, and to all this add the propoſal of the greateſt arguments and motives to induce him to come; let all theſe have the advantage of the fitteſt ſeaſon to work upon his heart; yet no man can come till God draw him: we move as we are moved; as Chriſts coming to us, ſo our coming to him are the pure effects of grace.

ut ergo deſideremus adjutorium, hoc quoque eſt gratiæ; ipſa namque incipit effundi, ut incipiat poſci. Fulgen. Epiſt. 6. ad Theod.

Three things require Explication in this point before us.

Firſt, *What the drawing of the Father imports.*

Secondly, *In what manner he draws men to Chriſt.*

Thirdly, *How it appears that none can come till they be ſo drawn.*

Firſt, What the drawing of the Father imports. 1.

To open this, let it be conſidered, that *drawing* is uſually diſtinguiſht into *Phyſical* and *Moral*. The former is either by coaction, force, and compulſion, or by a ſweet congruous efficacy upon the will: as to violence and compulſion it is none of Gods way and Method, it being both againſt the nature of the will of man which cannot be forced, and againſt the will of Jeſus Chriſt who loves to reign over a free and willing people, *Pſal.* 110. 4. *The people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*: or as that word may be rendred, they ſhall be *voluntarineſſes*, as willing as willingneſs it ſelf: it is not then by a forcible *coaction*, but in a *Moral* way of perſwaſion that God the Father draws men to Jeſus Chriſt: he draws *with the bands of a man*, as they are called, *Hoſea* 11. 14. (*i. e.*) in a way of rational conviction of the mind and Conſcience, and effectual perſwaſion of the will.

But yet by *Moral perſwaſion* we muſt not underſtand a ſimple and bare propoſal or tender of Chriſt and grace, leaving it ſtill at the ſinners choice whether he will comply with

with it or no, * for though God do not force the will contrary to its nature, yet there is a real internal efficiency implyed in this *drawing*, or an immediate operation of the Spirit upon the heart and will which in a way Congruous and suitable to its nature takes away the rebellion and reluctance of it, and of unwilling makes it willing to come to Christ: and in this respect we own a *physical* as well as a *Moral* influence of the Spirit in this work: and so the Scripture expresles it, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. *that we may know what is the exceeding greatnes of his power towards us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead*: here is much more than a naked proposal made to the will, there is a *power* as well as a *tender*, greatnes of power, and yet more, the exceeding greatnes of his power; and this power hath an actual efficiency ascribed to it, he works upon our hearts and wills *according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead*: thus he fulfills in us all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power, 2 *Thes.* 1. 11.

* *Non videmus dum concionantem, scribentem, docentem, tamen ac si videmus, credimus, habet enim omnis veritas vim inclinativam, & major, majorem; & maxima, maximam: sed cur ergo non omnes credunt evangelio? Respondeo, quod non omnes trahuntur a deo.* Baptist. Mantuanus de patientia, lib. 3. cap. 2.

Cœlestis quedam & ineffabilis suavitas. Jansenius Aug. Lib. 4. cap. 1.

And this is that which the *Schools* call *gratia efficax*, effectual grace, and others *victrix delectatio* an overcoming conquering delight: thus the work is carried on with a most efficacious sweetnes. So that the liberty of the will is not infringed, whilst the obstinacy of the will is effectually subdued and over-ruled: for want of this there are so many *almost Christians* in the world, hence are all those vanishing imperfect works which come to nothing, call'd in Scripture a *morning cloud*, *an early dew*: had this mighty power gone forth with the word, they had never vanished, or perished like *Embryos* as they do: So then, God draws not only in a moral way by proposing a suitable object to the will, but also in a *physical* way, or by immediate powerful influence upon the will: not infringing the Liberty of it, but yet infallibly and effectually perswading it to come to Christ.

2. Secondly, Next let us consider the marvellous way and manner in which the Lord draws the souls of poor sinners to Jesus Christ, and you will find he doth it

1. Gra-

1. Gradually,
2. Congruouſly,
3. Powerfully,
4. Effectually, and
5. Finally.

Firſt, This bleſſed work is carried on by the Spirit *gradually*, bringing the ſoul ſtep by ſtep in the due method and order of the Goſpel to Chriſt: illumination, conviction, compunction prepare the way to Chriſt; and then faith unites the ſoul to him: without humiliation there can be no faith, *Mat.* 21.32. *ye repented not, that ye might believe*: 'tis the burdenſome ſenſe of ſin that brings the ſoul to Chriſt for reſt, Mat. 11.28. *come unto me ye that are weary and heavy laden*: but without Conviction there can be no Compunction, no humiliation; he that is not convinced of his ſin and miſery, never bewails it nor mourns for it: never was there one tear of true repentance ſeen to drop from the eye of an unconvinced ſinner.

And without *illumination* there can be no Conviction, for what is Conviction but the application of the light which is in the underſtanding or mind of a man to his heart and Conſcience? *Acts* 2.37. In this order therefore the Spirit (ordinarily) draws ſouls to Chriſt, he ſhines into their minds by illumination, applys that light to their Conſciences by effectual Conviction, breaks and wounds their hearts for ſin in Compunction, and then moves the will to embrace and cloſe with Chriſt in the way of Faith for life and ſalvation.

Theſe ſeveral ſteps are more diſtinctly diſcerned in ſome Chriſtians than in others; they are more clearly to be ſeen in the *Adult Convert*, than thoſe that were drawn to Chriſt in their youth; in ſuch as were drawn to him out of a ſtate of prophaneneſs, than thoſe that had the advantage of a pious education; but in this order the work is carried on ordinarily in all, however it differ in point of clearneſs in the one, and in the other.

Secondly, He draws ſinners to Chriſt *Congruouſly*, and very agreeably to the nature and way of man. So he ſpeaks,

Funibus hominum (i. e.) *humanis: non quibus trahi ac deduci solent boves.*

Hoſea 11. 4. *I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love:* not as beaſts are drawn, but as men are inclined and wrought to complyance by rational Conviction of their Judgements, and powerful perſwaſion of their wills; the minds of ſinners are naturally blinded by ignorance, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. and their affections bewitched to their Luſts, *Gal.* 3. 4. and whilſt it is thus, no arguments of intreaties can poſſibly prevail to bring them off from the ways of ſin to Chriſt.

The way therefore which the Lord takes to win and draw them to Chriſt, is by rectifying their falſe apprehenſions, and ſhewing them infinitely more good in Chriſt than in the Creature, and in their Luſts, yea, by ſatisfying their underſtandings that there is goodneſs enough in Jeſus Chriſt, to whom he is drawing them,

Firſt, To outbid all temporal good, which is to be denied for his ſake.

Secondly, To preponderate all temporal evils which are to be ſuffered for his ſake.

Firſt, That there is more good in Chriſt than in all temporal good things, which we are to deny or forſake upon his account: this being once clearly and convincingly diſcovered to the underſtanding, the will is thereby prepared to quit all that which entangles and with holds it from coming to Chriſt: there is no man that loves money ſo much, but he will willingly part with it for that which is more worth to him than the ſum he parts with to purchaſe it: *Matth.* 13. 45, 46. *The Kingdome of heaven is like to a Merchant man, ſeeking goodly Pearls, who when he hath found one Pearl of great price, goeth and ſelleth all that he hath and buyeth it.*

Such an invaluable *Pearl* is Jeſus Chriſt, infinitely more worth than all that a poor ſinner hath to part with for him, and is a more *real* good than the creature. Theſe are but vain ſhadows, *Prov.* 23. 5. Chriſt is a ſolid ſubſtantial good: yea, he is, and by Conviction appears to be a more *ſuitable* good than the creature: the world cannot juſtifie and ſave, but Chriſt can. Chriſt is a more *neceſſary* good than the creature, this is for our temporal *Conveniency*, but he of eternal *neceſſity*. He is a more *Durable* good than any creature

ture comfort is or can be: *the faſhion of this world paſſeth away*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. but durable riches and righteouſneſs are in him, *Prov.* 8. 17. Thus Chriſt appears in the day of conviction infinitely more excellent than the world, he out-bids all the offers that the world can make, and this gives the main ſtroke to this work, of drawing a Soul to Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, And then (to remove every block out of the way to Chriſt) God diſcovers to the Soul enough in him to preponderate and much more than recompence all the evils and ſufferings it can endure for his ſake.

'Tis true, they that cloſe with Chriſt, cloſe with his *croſs* alſo: they muſt expect to ſave no more but their ſouls by him: he tells us what we muſt truſt to, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. *If any man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and children, and brethren and ſiſters; yea, and his own life alſo; he cannot be my diſciple: and whoſoever doth not bear his croſs and come after me, cannot be my diſciple.*

To read ſuch a Text as this with ſuch a Comment upon it as Satan and our own fleſh can make, is enough to ſcare a man from Chriſt for ever: nor is it poſſible by all the arguments in the world to draw any ſoul to Chriſt upon ſuch terms as theſe, till the Lord convince it, that there is enough, and much more than enough in Jeſus Chriſt to recompence all theſe ſufferings and loſſes we endure for him.

But when the ſoul is ſatisfied that theſe ſufferings are but *external* upon the vile *body*, but the benefit that comes by Chriſt is *internal* in a mans own *ſoul*, Theſe afflictions are but *temporal*, *Rom.* 8. 18. but Chriſt and his benefits are *eternal*: this muſt need prevail with the *will* to come over to Chriſt notwithſtanding all the evils of ſuffering that accompany him, when the reality of all this is diſcovered by the Lord, and the power of God goes along with theſe diſcoveries. Thus the Lord draws in our own way, by rational Convictions of the underſtanding and allurements of the will.

And it's poſſible this may be the reaſon why ſome poor ſouls miſ-judge the workings of the Spirit of God upon themſelves, thinking they never had that wonderful and mighty power of God in converſion acting upon their hearts, be-

cauſe they find all that is done upon their hearts that way, is done in the ordinary courſe and method of Nature: they conſider, compare, are convinced, and then reſolve to chooſe Chriſt and his ways; whereas they expect to feel ſome ſtrange operations that ſhall have the viſible Characters of the immediate power of God upon them, and ſuch a power they might diſcern, if they would conſider it as working in this way and method: but they cannot diſtinguiſh Gods acts from their own, and that puzzles them.

Thirdly, The drawings of the Father are very *powerful. The arm of the Lord is revealed in this work, Iſa.* 53. 1. It was a powerful word indeed that made the light at firſt ſhine out of darkneſs, and no leſs power is required to make it ſhine into our hearts, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. That day in which the ſoul is made willing to come to Chriſt, is call'd *the day of his power, Pſal.* 110. 3. The Scripture expreſſeth the work of converſion by a threefold *Metaphor.* viz.

That of a *reſurrection* from the dead, *Rom.* 6. 4.

That of *Creation*, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. And

That of *Victory* or Conqueſt, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. All theſe ſet forth the infinite power of God in this work, for no leſs than almighty power is required to each of them; and if you ſtrictly examine the diſtinct notions, you ſhall find the power of God more and more illuſtriouſly diſplay'd in each of them.

To raiſe the dead is the effect of almighty power, but then there ſurrection ſuppſe th pre-exiſtent matter. In the work of *creation*, there is no pre-exiſtent matter, but then there is no oppoſition: that which is not, rebels not againſt the power that gives it being. But *Victory* and Conqueſt ſuppoſes oppoſition, all the power of corrupt Nature arming it ſelf and fighting againſt God, but yet not able to fruſtrate his deſign.

Suavis motus in verbo, & fortis tractus in Deo.
Eſt enim quedam neceſſitas voluntaria.
Moulin. Anat. Armin.

Let the ſoul whom the father draws ſtruggle and reluctate as much as it can, it ſhall come, yea, and come willingly too, when the drawing power of God is upon it. O the ſelf-conflicts, the contrary reſolves with which the ſoul finds it ſelf diſtracted and rent aſunder! the hopes and fears, the incouragements and diſcouragements, they will, and they will not! but victorious grace conquers all

all oppoſition at laſt. We find an excellent example of this in bleſſed *Auguſtine* * who ſpeaks of this very work, the drawing of his ſoul to Chriſt, and how he felt in that day two wills in himſelf, one old, the other new; one carnal, the other ſpiritual, and how in theſe their contrary motions and conflicts he was torn aſunder in his own thoughts and reſolutions, ſuffering that unwillingly, which he did willingly. And certainly if we conſider how deep the ſoul is rooted by natural inclination, and long continued cuſtome in ſin, how extreamly averſe it is to the ways of ſtrict godlineſs and mortification, how Satan that invidious enemy, that ſtrong man armed fortifies the ſoul to defend his poſſeſſion againſt Chriſt, and intrenches himſelf in the underſtanding, will, and affections; by deep rooted prejudices againſt Chriſt and holineſs, it is the wonder of wonders to ſee a ſoul quitting all its beloved luſts and fleſhly intereſts and endearments, and coming willingly under Chriſts yoak.

* *Ita duæ voluntates meæ, una vetus, alia nova; illa carnalis, illa ſpiritualis confligebant inter ſe atq; diſcordando diſſipabant animam meam. — ibi enim magis jam non ego, quia ex magna parte id patiebar invitus, quod faciebam volens.* Aug. confeſs. lib. 8. c. 5.

Fourthly, The drawings of God are very *effectual*: there is indeed a Common and *ineffectual* work upon hypocrites and *Apoſtates*, call'd in Scripture *a morning cloud*, an *early dew*, *Hoſea* 6. 4. theſe may believe for a time, and fall away at laſt, *Luke* 8. 13. their wills may be half won, they may be drawn half way to Chriſt, and return again. So it was with *Agrippa*, *Acts* 26. 28. ἐν ὀλίγῳ πείθεις, within a very little thou perſwadeſt me to be a Chriſtian: but in Gods elected ones it is effectual: their wills are not only *almoſt*, but *altogether* perſwaded to embrace Chriſt, and quit the ways of ſin, how pleaſant, gainful and dear ſoever they have been to them: the Lord not only draws, but draws home thoſe ſouls to Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 37. *all that the Father hath given me, ſhall come to me.*

Suadere eſt conantis, perſuadere efficientis: ſuadet qui conſulit, perſuadit qui quo vult inducit hominem. Eraſm.

It is confeſſed, that in the drawing home of the very elect to Chriſt, there may be and frequently are many pauſes, ſtands, and demurrs, they have convictions, affections and reſolutions ſtirring in them, which like early bloſſoms ſeem to be nipt and dye away again. There is frequently (in young ones eſpecially) an hopeful appearance of grace, they make conſcience of ſins, and duties: they have ſometimes notable rouzings and awakenings under the word, they are obſerved

to

to affect retirements for meditation and prayer, and delight to be in the company of Christians, and after all this, youthful lusts and vanities are found to stifle and choak these hopeful beginnings, and the work seems to stand (it may be some years) at a pause, however at last the Lord makes it victorious over all opposition, and sets it home with power upon their hearts.

Fifthly, To conclude, Those whom the Father draws to Christ he draws to him *finally* and for ever. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Rom.* 11. 29. They are so as to God the giver, he never repents that he hath called his people into the fellowship of his Son Christ Jesus: and they are so on the believers part, he is never sorry, whatever he afterwards meets with, that he is come to Christ.

There is a time when Christians are drawn to Christ, but there shall never be a time in which they shall be drawn away from Christ, *Joh.* 10. 29. there's no plucking them out of the Fathers hand. It was common to a Proverb in the Primitive times, when they would express an impossibility, *you may as soon draw a Christian from Christ, as do it:* when Christ asked that question of the disciples, *Will ye also go away? Lord* (saith *Peter* in the name of them all) *to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, Joh.* 6. 68. They that are thus drawn do with full purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord. And thus of the manner and quality of effectual drawing.

3. Thirdly, In the last place, I am to evince the impossibility of coming to Christ without the Fathers drawings: and this will evidently appear upon the consideration of these two particulars.

First, The difficulty of this work is above all the power of nature to overcome.

Secondly, That little power and abili y that nature hath, it will never employ to such a purpose as this, till the drawing power of God be upon the will of a sinner.

First, If all the power of nature were imploy'd in this design, yet such are the difficulties of this work, that it surmounts all the abilities of nature: this the Scripture roundly and plainly affirms, *Eph.* 2. 8. *by grace are ye saved through faith,*

faith, and that not of your ſelves, it is the gift of God. To think of Chriſt is eaſie, but to come to Chriſt is (to nature) impoſſible: to ſend forth lazy and ineffectual wiſhes to Chriſt we may; but to bring Chriſt and the ſoul together requires the almighty power of God, *Eph.* 1. 19. The grace of faith by which we come to Chriſt, is as much the free gift of God, as Chriſt himſelf who is the object of faith, *Phil.* 1. 29. *to you it is freely given to believe.* And this will eaſily let it ſelf into your underſtandings if you but conſider

the { Subject, Act, and Enemies } of this work of faith or coming to Chriſt.

1. Firſt, Conſider the *Subject* of faith in which it is wrought, or what it is that is drawn to Chriſt: 'tis *the heart of a ſinner*: which is naturally as indiſpoſed to this work as the wood which *Elijah* laid in order upon the *Altar* was to catch fire, when he had poured ſo much water upon it as did not only wet the wood, but alſo fill'd up the trench round about it, 1 *Kings* 18. 33. For it's naturally a dark, blind, and ignorant heart, *Job* 11. 12. and ſuch an heart can never believe, till he that commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, do ſhine into it, 2 *Cor.* 5..14.

Nor will it avail any thing to ſay, though man be born in darkneſs and ignorance, yet afterwards he may acquire knowledge in the uſe of means, as we ſee many natural men do in a very high degree: for this is not that light that brings the ſoul to Chriſt, yea, this natural unſanctified light blinds the ſoul and prejudices it more againſt Chriſt than ever it was before, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21, 26.

As it is a blind and ignorant heart, ſo it's a *ſelfiſh heart* by nature: all its deſigns and aims terminate in Self: this is the *Centre* and weight of the ſoul, no righteouſneſs but its own is ſought after, that, or none, *Rom.* 10. 3. now for a ſoul to renounce and deny Self in all its forms, modes, and intereſts, as every one doth that cometh to Chriſt, To diſclaim and deny natural, moral, and religious Self and come to Chriſt, as a poor, miſerable, wretched, empty creature; to live upon his

his righteouſneſs for ever, is as ſupernatural and wonderful, as to ſee the hills and mountains ſtart from their baſes and Centres, and flye like wandering Atomes in the Air.

Nay this heart which is to come to Chriſt is not only dark and ſelfiſh, but full of pride. O 'tis a deſperate proud heart by nature, it cannot ſubmit to come to Chriſt as *Benhadads* ſervants came to the *King of Iſrael* with ſackcloath on their loyns, and ropes upon their heads. To take guilt, ſhame and confuſion of face to our ſelves, and acknowledge the righteouſneſs of God in our eternal damnation; to come to Chriſt naked and empty as one that juſtifies the ungodly; I ſay nature left to it ſelf, would as ſoon be damned as do this: the proud heart can never come to this, till the Lord have humbled and broken it by his power.

2. Secondly, Let us take the *Act* of faith into conſideration alſo, as it is here deſcribed, by the ſouls *coming to Jeſus Chriſt*, and you will find a neceſſity of the Fathers drawings, for this evidently implies that which is *againſt the ſtream* and current of corrupt nature, and that which is *above the Sphere* and capacity of the moſt refined and accompliſhed nature.

Firſt, It's againſt the Stream and Current of our corrupt nature to come to Chriſt. For let us but conſider the *Term from which* the ſoul departs when it comes to Chriſt. In that day it leaves all its luſts and ways of ſin, how pleaſant, ſweet and profitable ſoever they have been unto it. *Iſa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord*: *way* and *thoughts*, (*i. e.*) both the practice and delight of ſin, muſt be forſaken, the outward and inward man muſt be cleanſed from it. Now there are in the boſomes of unregenerate men ſuch darling Luſts, that have given them ſo much *practical*, and *ſpeculative* pleaſure, which have brought ſo much profit to them, which have been born and bred up with them, and which upon all theſe accounts are endeared to their ſouls to that degree; that it's eaſier for them to dye, than to forſake them: yea, nothing is more common among ſuch men, than to venture eternal damnation, rather than ſuffer a ſeparation from their ſins.

And

And which is yet much more difficult in coming to Christ, the soul forsakes not only its *sinful self*, but its *righteous self*: (*i.e.*) not only its worst sins, but its best performances, accomplishments, and excellencies. Now this is one of the greatest straits that Nature can be put to: righteousness by works was the first liquor that ever was put into the vessel, and it still retains the tang and savour of it, and will to the end of the world. *Rom.* 10. 3. *For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν, they have not *submitted*: to come naked and empty to Christ and receive all from him as a free gift, is to proud corrupt nature, the greatest abasement and submission in the world.

Let the gospel furnish its Table with the richest and costliest dainties that ever the blood of Christ purchased, such is the pride of nature, that it disdains to tast them, except it may also pay the reckoning. If the old *Hive* be removed from the place where it was wont to stand, the *Bees* will come home to the old place, yea, and many of them you shall find will dye there, rather than go to the *Hive* though it stand in a far better place than it did before. Just so stands the case with men. The *Hive* is removed, (*i.e.*) we are no more to expect righteousness as *Adam* did, by obeying and working, but by believing, and coming to Christ; but nature had as lieve be damned as do this: it still goes about to establish its own righteousness.

Vertues, Duties, and Moral excellencies these are the Ornaments of nature, here is Nature set off in its sumptuous attire and rich embellishments, and now to renounce it, disclaim and contemn it as dross and dung in comparison of Christ as believers do, *Phil.* 3. 8. this I say is against the grain of nature. We reckon it the strange effect of self-denyal in *Mahomet the Great*, who being so enamoured with his beautiful *Irene*, would be perswaded upon reasons of State with his own hand to strike off her head, and that when she appeared in all her rich ornaments before him, rather like such a *Goddess* as the Poets in their ecstasies use to feign, than a mortal creature: and yet certainly this nothing is to that self-denyal which is exercised in our coming to Christ. *Knowles* History of the Turks.

Secondly, And if we look to the other *Term* to which the ſoul moves, we ſhall find it acting as much above the *Sphere* and ability of improved Nature as here it acts and moves againſt the ſtream and current of corrupted nature: for how wonderful and ſupernatural an adventure is that which the ſoul makes in the day that it comes to Jeſus Chriſt!

Surely for any poor ſoul to venture it ſelf for ever upon Jeſus Chriſt whom it never ſaw, nay, upon Chriſt whoſe very exiſtence its own unbelief calls into queſtion whether he be, or no: and that when it's even weighed down to the duſt with the burdenſome ſenſe of its own vileneſs and total unworthineſs, feeling nothing in it ſelf but ſin and miſery, the workings of death and fears of wrath: to go to Chriſt of whoſe pardoning grace and mercy it never had any the leaſt experience, nor can find any ground of hope in it ſelf that it ſhall be accepted; this is as much above the power of nature, as it is for a ſtone to riſe from the earth and fix it ſelf among the Stars: well might the *Apoſtle* aſcribe it to that almighty power which raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. if the Lord draw not the Soul, and that with an omnipotent pull, it can never come from it ſelf to Chriſt. And yet farther,

Thirdly, The Natural impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt will more clearly appear, if we conſider the *enemies* to faith, or what blocks are roll'd by Satan and his inſtruments into the way to Chriſt: to mention (in this place) no more, but our own carnal reaſon as it's armed and managed by the ſubtilty of *Satan*; what a wonder is it that any ſoul ſhould come to Chriſt?

Theſe are the ſtrong holds (mentioned 2 *Cor.* 10. 4.) out of which thoſe objections, fears and diſcouragements ſally, by which the ſoul is fiercely aſſaulted in the way to Chriſt.

Wilt thou forſake all thy pleaſures, merry company, and ſenſible comforts to live a ſad, retired, penſive life? wilt thou begger and undo thy ſelf, let go thy comforts in hand for an hope of that which thine eyes never ſaw, nor haſt thou any certainty that it's any more than a fancy? wilt thou that haſt lived in reputation and credit all thy life, now become

come the ſcorn and contempt of the world? thinkeſt thou thy ſelf able to live ſuch a ſtrict, ſevere, mortified and ſelf-denying a life, as the word of God requires? and what if perſecution ſhould ariſe, (as thou muſt expect it will) canſt thou forſake father and mother, wife and children, yea, and give up thine own life too to a cruel and bloody death? be adviſed better before thou reſolve in ſo important a matter: what thinkeſt thou of thy fore-fathers, that lived and dyed in that way thou art now leaving? art thou wiſer than they? do not the generality of men walk in the ſame paths thou haſt hitherto walked in? if this way lead to hell as thou feareſt it may; think then how many millions of men muſt periſh as well as thy ſelf, and is ſuch a ſuppoſition conſiſtent with the gracious and merciful nature of God? Beſides, think what ſort of people thoſe are unto whom thou art about to joyn thy ſelf in this new way? are there not to be found among them many things to diſcourage thee and cool thy zeal? they are generally of the lower and baſer ſort of men, poor and deſpicable: ſeeſt thou not though their profeſſion be holy, how earthly, carnal, proud, factious, and hypocritical many of them are found to be! and doubtleſs the reſt are like them, though their hypocriſie be not yet diſcovered.

O what ſtands, and demurrs! what heſitations, and doubts is the ſoul clog'd with in its way to Chriſt! but yet none of theſe can with-hold and detain the ſoul, when the Father draws: greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world: and thus you ſee the nature, manner, and efficacy of divine drawings, and how impoſſible it is for any Soul to come to Chriſt without them.

The Inferences and Improvements of the point follow.

Infer. 1.

How deeply and throughly is the nature of man corrupted, and what an enemy is every man to his own happineſs, that he muſt be drawn to it? Joh. 5. 40. you will not come unto me that ye might have life. *Infer.* 1.

Life is desirable in every mans eyes, and eternal is the most excellent life; yet in this the world is agreed rather to dye and perish for ever than come to Christ for life. Had Christ told us of Fields and Vineyards, Sheep and Oxen, Gold and Silver, honours and sensual pleasures, who would not have come to him for these? but to tell them of mortification, self-denyal, strictness of life, and sufferings for his sake, and all this for an happiness to be enjoyed in the world to come, nature will never like such a proposition as this.

You see where it sticks, not in a simple inability to believe, but in an inability complicated with enmity, they neither can come, nor will come to Christ: 'tis true, all that do come to Christ come willingly, but thanks to the grace of God that hath freed and perswaded the will, else they had never been willing to come: who ever found his own heart first stir and move towards Christ? how long may we wait and expect before we shall feel our hearts naturally burn with desires after, and love to Jesus Christ?

This aversation of the will and affections from God is one of the master roots of original sin. No argument can prevail to bring the soul to Christ, till this be master'd and overpowred by the Fathers drawings. In our motions to sin we need *trigging*: but in all our motions to Christ we as much need *drawing*. He that comes to heaven may say, Lord if I had had my own way and will I had never come here: if thou hadst not drawn me I should never have come to thee. O the riches of the grace of God! oh unparallel'd mercy and goodness! not only to prepare such a glory as this for an *unworthy* soul, but to put forth the exceeding greatness of thy power afterwards to draw an *unwilling* soul to the enjoyment of it!

Inference 2.

Infer. 2. *What enemies are they to God and the souls of men, that do all they can to discourage and hinder the Conversion of men to Christ? God draws forward, and these do all that in them lyes to draw backward,* (i. e.) *to prejudice and discourage them from coming to Jesus Christ in the way of faith: this is a direct opposition to God, and a plain Confederacy with the Devil.*

O how

O how many have been thus diſcouraged in their way to Chriſt, by their carnal relations, I cannot ſay friends! their greateſt enemies have been the men of their own houſe: theſe have pleaded (as if the Devil had hired and fee'd them) againſt the everlaſting welfare of their own fleſh. O cruel parents, brethren, and ſiſters; that jeer, frown, and threaten; where they ſhould encourage, aſſiſt and rejoyce! ſuch *parents* are the Devils *children*. *Satan* chuſes ſuch inſtruments as you are above all others for this work: he knows what influence and authority you have upon them, and over them: and what fear, love, and dependance they have for you, and upon you: ſo that none in all the world are like to manage the deſign of their damnation ſo effectually as you are like to do it.

Will you neither come to Chriſt your ſelves, nor ſuffer your dear relations that would? had you rather find them in the *Ale-houſe*, than in the Cloſet? did you inſtrumentally give them their being, and will you now be the inſtruments of ruining for ever thoſe beings they had from you? did you ſo earneſtly deſire children, ſo tenderly nurſe and provide for them, take ſuch delight in them, and after all this do what in you lies to damn and deſtroy them? if theſe lines ſhall fall into any ſuch hands, O that God would ſet home the conviction and ſenſe of this horrid evil upon their hearts.

And no leſs guilty of this ſin are ſcandalous and looſe profeſſors who ſerve to furniſh the Devil with the greateſt arguments he hath to diſſuade men from coming to Chriſt: 'tis your looſeneſs and hypocriſie by which he hopes to ſcare others from Chriſt. It's ſaid *Cant.* 2. 7. *I charge you by the Roes and Hinds of the field, that ye ſtir not up nor awake my beloved till he pleaſe.*

Roes and Hinds (like young Converts, and comers towards Chriſt) are ſhy and timerous Creatures that ſtart at the leaſt ſound, or yelp of a dog; and flye away: take heed what you do in this caſe, leſt you go down to hell under the guilt of damning more ſouls than your own.

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3. *Learn hence the true ground and reason of those strange, amazing, and supernatural effects that you behold and so admire in the world, as often as you see sinners forsaking their pleasant profitable corruptions and companions, and embracing the ways of Christ, godliness, and mortification.*

It is said 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *they think it strange that you run not with them into the same excess of riot*: the word is ξενίζονται, they stand at a gaze as the hen that hath hatcht *Patridge eggs* doth, when she sees them take the wing and flye away from her.

Beloved, it is the worlds wonder to see their Companions in sin forsake them: those that were once as prophane and vain as themselves, it may be more, to forsake their society, retire into their Closets, mourn for sin, spend their time in meditation and prayer, embrace the severest duties, and content to run the greatest hazards in the world for Christ; but they see not that almighty power that draws them, which is too strong for all the sinful tyes and engagements in the world to with-hold and detain them.

A man would have wonder'd to see *Elisha* leave the Oxen and run after *Elijah* saying, *Let me go I pray thee and kiss my Father and my Mother, and then I will follow thee*; when *Elijah* had said nothing to perswade him to follow him, only as he past by him he cast his mantle on him, 1 *Kings* 10. 19, 20. Surely, that soul whom God draws must needs leave all and follow Christ, for the power of God resteth on it: all carnal tyes and engagements to sin break and give way when the Father draws the soul to Christ in the day of his power.

Inference 4.

Infer. 4. *Is this the first spring of spiritual motion after Christ? learn then from hence how it comes to pass that so many excellent Sermons and powerful perswasions are ineffectual, and cannot draw or win one soul to Christ. Surely it is because ministers draw alone, and the special saving power of God goes not forth at all times alike with their endeavours.*

Paul

Paul was a choſen Veſſel, fill'd with a greater meaſure of gifts and graces by the Spirit than any that went before him, or followed after him; and as his talents ſo his diligence in improving them was beyond any recorded example we read of amongſt men: he rather * flew like a *Seraphim* than travelled upon his maſters errand about the world. *Apollo* was an eloquent preacher and mighty in the Scriptures, yet *Paul is nothing, and Apollo nothing; but God that gives the increaſe*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. We are too apt to admire men, yea, and the beſt men are but too apt to go forth in the ſtrength of their own parts and preparations; but God ſecures his own glory, and magnifies his own power frequently in giving ſucceſs to weaker endeavours, and men of lower abilities, when he withholds it from men of more raiſed, refined, and excellent gifts and abilities.

ὡς ἅγιος τὴν διακονίαν. ἀλλ' ὡς ἀπόστολος διέδραμε. *Chryſoſt.*

It is our great honour who are the miniſters of the Goſpel that we are συνεργοὶ *workers together with God*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. in his ſtrength we can prevail, *the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. but if his preſence, bleſſing and aſſiſtance be not with us we are nothing, we can do nothing.

If we prepare diligently, pray heartily, preach zealouſly, and our hearers go as they came without any ſpiritual effects and fruits of our labours; what ſhall we ſay, but as *Martha* ſaid to Chriſt, Lord if thou hadſt been here my Brother had not dyed: had the Spirit of God gone forth with his eſpecial efficacy and bleſſing with this prayer, or that Sermon; theſe ſouls had not departed dead and ſenſeleſs from under it.

Infer. 5.

Doth all ſucceſs and efficacy depend upon the Fathers drawings? Let none then deſpair of their unregenerate and carnal relations, over whoſe obſtinacy they do, and have cauſe to mourn. *Infer.* 5.

What if they have layen as many years under the preaching of the Goſpel as that poor man did at the pool of *Betheſda*, and hitherto to no purpoſe? a time may come at laſt (as it did for him) when the Spirit of God may move upon the

the waters, I mean, put a quickening and converting power into the means, and then the desire of your souls for them shall be fulfill'd.

It may be you have poured out many prayers and tears to the Lord for them, you have cryed for them as *Abraham* for his Son, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* O that this poor husband, wife, child, brother or sister might live in thy sight, and still you see they contain at one rate, carnal, dead and senseless: well, but yet give not up your hopes, nor cease your pious endeavours, the time may come when the Father may draw as well as you, and then you shall see them quit all and come to Christ, and nothing shall hinder them. They are now drawn away of their own lusts, they are easily drawn away by their sinful Companions, but when God draws, none of these shall withdraw them from the Lord Jesus. What is their ignorance, obstinacy, and hardness of heart before that mighty power that subdues all things to it self? Go therefore to the Lord by prayer for them, and say, Lord I have laboured for my poor relations in vain, I have spent my exhortations to little purpose: the work is too difficult for me, I can carry it no farther, but thou canst; O let thy power go forth, they shall be willing in the day of thy power.

Infer. 6.

Infer. 6. *If none can come to Christ except the Father draw them, then surely none can be drawn from Christ except the Father leave them: that power which at first drew them to Christ, can secure and establish them in Christ to the end. Joh.* 10. 29. *my Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.*

When the power of God at first draws us out of our natural state to Christ, it finds us not only *impotent*, but *obstinate*, not only unable but unwilling to come; and yet this power of God prevails against all opposition: how much more is it able to preserve and secure us, when his fear is put into our inward parts, so that we dare not depart, we have no will to depart from him? Well then,

if

if the world ſay I will enſnare thee; if the Devil ſay I will deſtroy thee, if the fleſh ſay I will betray thee, yet thou art ſecure and ſafe as long as God hath ſaid *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, *Heb.* 13. 5.

Infer. 7.

Let this engage you to a conſtant attendance upon the ordinances of God in which this drawing power of God is ſometimes put forth upon the hearts of men. *Infer.* 7.

Beloved, there are certain ſeaſons in which the Lord comes nigh to men in the Ordinances and Duties of his worſhip, and we know not at what time the Lord cometh forth by his Spirit upon this deſign: he many times comes in an hour when we look not for him, when we think not of him, *I am found of them that ſought me not*, *Iſa.* 65. 1. it's good therefore to be found in the way of the Spirit: had that poor man that lay ſo long at the pool of *Betheſda* reaſoned thus with himſelf, ſo long have I lain here in vain expecting a cure, it's to no purpoſe to wait longer, and ſo had been abſent at that very time when the Angel came down, he had in all likelihood carryed his diſeaſe to the grave with him.

How doſt thou know but this very *Sabbath*, this Sermon, this prayer which thou haſt no heart to attend, and art tempted to neglect; may be the ſeaſon, and inſtrument wherein the Lord may do that for thy ſoul which was never yet done upon it?

Infer. 8.

To conclude, how are all the Saints engaged to put forth all the power and ability they have for God, who hath put forth his infinite almighty power to draw them to Chriſt! *Infer.* 8.

God hath done great things for your ſouls, he hath drawn you out of the miſerable ſtate of ſin and wrath, and that when he let others go, by nature as good as you, he hath drawn you into Union with Chriſt, and Communion with his glorious priviledges. O that you would henceforth imploy all the power you have for

God in duties of obedience, and in drawing others to Christ as much as in you lies, and say continually with the Church, *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Cant. 1. 4.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

The Fifth SERMON.

Serm. 5.

EPHES. 2. 1.

And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Opening that work of the Spirit more particularly, by which the soul is enabled to apply Christ.

IN the former Sermons we have seen our Union with Christ in the general nature of it, and the means by which it is effected, both *external* by the preaching of the Gospel, and *internal* by the drawings of the Father. We are now to bring our thoughts yet closer to this great mystery, and consider the bonds or ligaments by which Christ and believers are knit together in a blessed oneness.

And

And if we heedfully observe the Scripture expressions, and ponder the nature of this Union, we shall find there are two bands which knit Christ and the soul together, *viz.*

1. The Spirit on Christs part.
2. Faith on our part.

The *Spirit* on Christs part, *quickening* us with spiritual life, whereby Christ first takes hold of us, and *faith* on our part, when thus quickened, whereby we take hold of Christ: accordingly this Union with the Lord Jesus is expressed in Scripture sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of these means or bonds by which it is effected. Christ is sometimes said to be in us, so *Col.* 1. 27. *Christ in you the hope of glory*: and *Rom.* 8. 10. *And if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin*: and other times it is expressed by the other bond on our part, as 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. *we are in him that is true, even in his son Christ Jesus*: and 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.*

The difference betwixt both these is thus aptly expressed by a late Author, "Christ is in believers by his *Spirit*, 1 *Joh.* "4. 13. the believer is in Christ by *faith*, *Joh.* 1. 12. Christ "is in the believer by *inhabitation*, *Rom.* 3. 17. the believer "is in Christ by *implantation*, *Rom.* 6. 35. Christ is in the be- "liever as the head is in the body, *Col.* 1. 18. as the root in "the branches, *Joh.* 15. 5. believers are in Christ as the "members are in the head, *Eph.* 1. 23. or as the branches "are in the root, *Joh.* 15. 1, 7. Christ in the believer im- "plyeth life and *influence* from Christ, *Col.* 3. 4. the believer "in Christ implyeth *Communion*, and fellowship with Christ, "1 *Cor.* 1. 30. when Christ is said to be in the believer, we "are to understand it in reference to *Sanctification*; when the "believer is said to be in Christ it is in order to *Justi-* "*fication.*" *Mount Pisgah.* p. 22, 23.

Thus we apprehend, being our selves first apprehended by Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 3. 12. we cannot take hold of Christ, till first he take hold of us, no vital act of faith can be exercised, till a vital principle be first inspired: of both these bonds of Union we must speak distinctly, and first of the

first, *Christ quickening us by his Spirit in order to our Union with him*, of which we have an account in the Scripture before us, *You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins*: in which words we find these two things noted, *Viz.*

1. The infusion of a vital principle of grace.
2. The total indisposedness of the subject by nature.

1.

First, The infusion of a vital principle of grace, *you hath he quickened.* These words [*hath he quickened*] are a supplement, made to clear the sense of the *Apostle*, which else would have been more obscure by reason of that long Parenthesis betwixt the first and the fifth verses, for as the * learned observe, this word ὑμᾶς you, is governed of the verb συνεζωοποίησε *hath he quickened*, verse 5. so that here the words are transposed from the plain grammatical order, by reason of the interjection of a long sentence, therefore with good warrant our Translators have put the verb into this first verse, which is repeated verse the fifth, and so keeping faithfully to the scope, have excellently cleared the *Syntax* and order of the words. Now this verb συνεζωοποίησε *hath he quickened*, imports the first vital act of the spirit of God, for his first enlivening work upon the soul in order to its Union with Jesus Christ: for look as the blood of Christ is the fountain of all merit, so the Spirit of Christ is the fountain of all spiritual life: and until he quicken us, (*i.e.*) infuse the principle of the divine life into our souls, we can put forth no hand, or vital act of faith to lay hold upon Jesus Christ.

This his quickening work is therefore the first in order of nature to our Union with Christ and fundamental to all other acts of grace done and performed by us from our first closing with Christ throughout the whole course of our obedience: and this quickening act is said, verse the fifth, to be together with Christ: either noting (as some expound it) that it is the effect of the same power by which Christ was raised from the dead, according to *Eph.* 1. 19. or rather to be *quickened together with Christ* notes that new spiritual life which is infused into our dead souls in the time of our Union with Christ: for it is Christ to whom we are conjoyned and united in our regeneration, out of whom as a fountain all

* *Illud ὑμᾶς regitur à συνεζωοποίησε. v. 5. est igitur hoc loco & hyperbaton & synchysis & ἀποκοὶ τῆς σειρᾶς, qua est species τῆς ἀναπαλέπτε, cujus quidem anomaliæ causa est ἐπιμβολὴ interjectio sententiæ prolixioris.* Piscator. Pooles *Synop.*

Ex Christo conjuncto nobiscum ut capite cum membris profluunt in nos omnia beneficia in quorum numero est vivificatio. Rol. loc. in Loco.

all ſpiritual benefits flow to us, among which this vivification or quickening is one, and a moſt ſweet and precious one.

Zanchy, *Bodius* and many others, will have this *quickening* to comprize both our juſtification and regeneration, and to ſtand oppoſed both to *infernal* and *ſpiritual* death, and it may well be allowed; but it moſt properly imports our regeneration, wherein the Spirit in an ineffable and myſterious way, makes the ſoul to live to God, yea to live the life of God which was before *dead in treſpaſſis and ſins*: in which words we have

Secondly, In the next place, the total indiſpoſedneſs of the ſubjects by nature: for as it is well noted by a * learned man, The Apoſtle doth not ſay of theſe *Epheſians* that they were half dead, or ſick and infirm, but dead wholly, altogether dead, deſtitute of any faculty or ability ſo much as to think one good thought, or perform one good act: you were dead in reſpect of *condemnation*, being under the damning ſentence of the Law, and you were dead in reſpect of the privation of ſpiritual life, dead in oppoſition to Juſtification, and dead in oppoſition to regeneration and ſanctification: and the fatal inſtrument by which their Souls dyed is here ſhewed them, you were dead in or by *treſpaſſes* and *ſins*, this was the Sword that kill'd your ſouls, and cut them off from God. Some do curiouſly diſtinguiſh betwixt treſpaſſes and ſins, as if one pointed at *original*, the other at *actual* ſins; but I ſuppoſe they are promiſcuouſly uſed here, and ſerve to expreſs the cauſe of their ruine, or means of their ſpiritual death and deſtruction: this was their caſe when Chriſt came to quicken them, *dead in ſin*, and being ſo, they could not move themſelves towards Union with Chriſt, but as they were moved by the quickening Spirit of God.

2.

* *Non vocat hic ſemi mortuos aut ægrotos ac infirmos, ſed prorſus mortuos, omni facultate bene cogitandi aut agendi deſtituti.* Rolloc. in Loc.

Hence the obſervation will be this,

Doct.

That thoſe Souls which have Union with Chriſt, are quickened with a Supernatural principle of life by the Spirit of God in order thereunto. Doct.

The

The Spirit of God is not only a living Spirit, *formally* conſidered, but he is alſo the Spirit of life *effectively* or *cauſally* conſidered: and without his breathing or infuſing life into our ſouls, our Union with Chriſt is impoſſible.

Obſervandum eſt unionem & unitionem inter ſe differre: unio eſt rerum actus, qui formæ rationem habet, nempe actus rerum unitarum quâ unitæ ſunt: unitio autem actus ſignificat cauſæ efficientis, &c. Camero de Eccleſ. p. 222.

It is the obſervation of learned *Camero*, that there muſt be an *Unition* before there can be a *Union* with Chriſt. *Unition* is to be conceived *efficiently* as the work of Gods Spirit, joyning the believer to Chriſt, and Union is to be conceived *formally*, the joyning it ſelf of the perſons together: we cloſe with Chriſt by faith, but that faith being a vital act, preſuppoſes a principle of life communicated to us by the Spirit; therefore it's ſaid *Joh.* 11. 26. *whoſoever liveth and believeth in me ſhall never dye*: the vital act and operation of faith ſprings from this quickening Spirit: ſo in *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. the Apoſtle having in the firſt verſe opened the bleſſed eſtate of them that are in Chriſt, ſhews us in the ſecond verſe how we come to be in him, *The Spirit of life* (ſaith he) *which is in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of ſin and death.*

There is indeed a quickening work of the Spirit, which is *ſubſequent* to regeneration, conſiſting in his exciting, recovering, and actuating of his own graces in us, and from hence is the *liveline ſs* of a Chriſtian; and there is a quickening act of the Spirit *in our regeneration*, and from hence is the firſt ſpiritual *life* of a Chriſtian, of this I am here to ſpeak, and that I may ſpeak profitably to this point, I will in the Doctrinal part labour to open theſe five particulars.

- Firſt, What this ſpiritual life is in its nature and properties.
- Secondly, In what manner it is wrought or inſpired into the Soul.
- Thirdly, For what end, or with what deſign this life is ſo inſpired.
- Fourthly, I ſhall ſhew this work to be wholly ſupernatural.
- And then fifthly, Why this quickening muſt be antecedent to our actual cloſing with Chriſt by Faith.

Firſt,

First, We will enquire into the nature and properties of this life, and discover (as we are able) what it is. And we find it to consist in that *wonderful change which the Spirit of God makes upon the frame and temper of the soul, by his infusing or implanting the principles of grace in all the powers and faculties thereof.* 1.

A change it makes upon the soul, and that a marvellous one, no less than from death to life, for though a man be *physically* a living man, (*i. e.*) his natural soul hath Union with his body, yet his soul having no Union with Christ, he is *Theologically* a dead man, *Luke* 15. 24. and *Col.* 2. 13. alas it deserves not the name of life, to have a soul serving only to season and preserve the body a little while from stinking: to carry it up and down the world, and only enable it to eat and drink and talk and laugh, and then dye: then do we begin to live, when we begin to have Union with Christ the fountain of life by his Spirit communicated to us: from this time we are to reckon our life *as some have done: there be many changes made upon men besides this, many are changed from prophaneness to Civility, and from meer Civility to formality and a shadow of Religion, who still remain in the state and power of spiritual death notwithstanding; but when the Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us to quicken us with the new spiritual life, this is a wonderful change indeed: it gives us an *Esse supernaturale*, a new supernatural being, which is therefore call'd *a new creature, the new man, the hidden man of the heart*: the natural essence and faculties of the soul remain still, but it is devested of the old qualities, and endowed with new ones, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. *old things are past away, behold all things are become new.*

* *Hic jacet Similis cujus ætas multorum annorum fuit, ipse septem dun taxat annes vixit.*

And this change is not made by altering and rectifying the disorders of the life only, leaving the temper and frame of the heart still carnal; but by the infusion of a supernatural permanent principle into the soul, *Joh.* 4. 14. *it shall be in him a well of water*: principles are to a course of actions as fountains or springs are to the streams and rivers that flow from them, and are maintain'd by them: and hence is the evenness and constancy of renewed souls in the course of godliness.

Nor

Nor is this principle or habit *acquired* by accuſtoming our ſelves to holy actions, as natural habits are acquired by frequent acts, which beget a *diſpoſition*, and thence grow up to an *habit* or ſecond nature; but it is infuſed or implanted into the ſoul by the Spirit of God. So we read *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26. *a new heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you*: it grows not up out of our Natures, but is put, or infuſed into us: as it's ſaid of the two witneſſes, *Rev.* 11. 11. who lay dead in a *Civil ſenſe* three days and an half, that *the Spirit of life from God entered into them*; ſo it is here in a *ſpiritual ſenſe*, the ſpirit of life from God enters into the dead, carnal heart: it's all by way of ſupernatural infuſion.

Nor is it limited to this or that faculty of the ſoul, but grace or life is poured into all the faculties: *behold all things are become new*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. The underſtanding, will, thoughts, and affections are all renewed by it: the whole inner man is changed, yea, the tongue and hand, the diſcourſes and actions, even all the ways and courſes of the outward man are renewed by it.

But more particularly, we ſhall diſcern the nature of this ſpiritual life, by conſidering the properties of it, among which theſe are very remarkable.

Firſt, The ſoul that is joyned to Chriſt, is quickened with a *divine life*, ſo we read in 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. where believers are ſaid to be partakers or conſorts of the *divine nature*: a very high expreſſion, and warily to be underſtood. *Partakers of the divine nature*, not *eſſentially*, ſo it's wholly incommunicable to the Creature, nor yet *Hypoſtatically* and perſonally, ſo Chriſt only was a partaker of it, but our participation of the Divine nature muſt be underſtood in a way proper to believers, that is to ſay, we partake of it by the inhabitation of the Spirit of God in us: according to 1 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17. *know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the ſpirit of God dwelleth in you?* the Spirit who is God by nature, dwells in and actuates the ſoul whom he regenerates, and by ſanctifying cauſes it to live a *divine life*: from this life of God the unſanctified are ſaid to be alienated, *Eph.* 4. 18. but believers are partakers of it.

Secondly, And being divine, it muſt needs be the moſt *excellent* and tranſcendent life that any creature doth or can

can live in this world: it surmounts the natural, rational, and moral life of the unsanctified, as much as the Angelical life excels the life that flyes and worms of the earth do live.

Some think it a rare life to live in sensual pleasures, but the Scripture will not allow so much as the name of life to them; but tells us *they are dead whilest they live*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. certainly it is a wonderful elevation of the nature of man, to be quickened with such a life as this. There are two ways wherein the blessed God hath honoured poor man above the very Angels of heaven. One was by the Hypostatical Union of our nature in Christ, with the divine nature; the other is by uniting our persons mystically to Christ, and thereby communicating spiritual life to us: this later is a most glorious priviledge, and in one respect a more singular mercy than the former; for that honour which is done to our Nature by the Hypostatical Union, is common to all good and bad, even they that perish have yet that honour; but to be implanted into Christ by regeneration, and live upon him as the branch doth upon the Vine, this is a peculiar priviledge, a mercy hedg'd in from the world that is to perish, and only communicated to Gods elect, who are to live eternally with him in heaven.

Thirdly, This life infused by the regenerating Spirit, is a most *pleasant life*. All delights, all pleasures, all joys, which are not phantastick and delusive, have their spring and origin here. *Rom.* 8. 6. *to be spiritually minded is life and peace*, *(i. e.)* a most serene placid life, such a soul becomes, so far as it is influenced and sanctified by the Spirit, the very region of life and peace: when one thing is thus predicated of another *in casu recto* (saith a learned man) it speaks their intimate Connexion: peace is so connatural to this life, that you may either call it a life that hath peace in it, or a peace that hath life in it: yea it hath its enclosed pleasures in it, *Such as a stranger intermeddles not with*, *Prov.* 14. 10. Regeneration is the term from which all true pleasure commences, you never live a merry day, till you begin to live to God: therefore it's said *Luke* 15. 24. when the *prodigal son* was returned to his Father and reconciled, then *they began to be merry*.

None can make another by any words to understand what that pleasure is which the renewed soul feels diffused through all its faculties and affections in its communion with the Lord, and in the sealings and witnessings of his Spirit. That is a very apt and well known similitude which *Peter Martyr* used, and the Lord blessed to the conversion of that Noble Marquess *Galeacius*: If, said he, a man should see a company of people dancing upon the top of a remote hill, he would be apt to conclude they were a company of wild distracted people; but if he draw nearer and behold the excellent order, and hear the ravishing sweet Musick that is among them, he will quickly alter his opinion of them, and fall a dancing himself with them.

All the delights in the sensual life, all the pleasure that ever your lusts gave you, are but as the putrid stinking waters of a corrupt pond, where Toads lye croaking and spawning, to the Crystal streams of the most pure and pleasant fountain.

Fourthly, This life of God with which the regenerate are quickened in their Union with Christ as it is *a pleasant*, so it is also *a growing increasing life*. *Joh.* 4. 14. *It shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

It is not in our Sanctification, as it is in our Justification, our Justification is compleat and perfect, no defect is found there, but the new Creature labours under many defects: all believers are equally Justified, but not equally Sanctified: therefore you read 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. that the inward man is renewed day by day: and 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Christians are exhorted to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour: if this work were perfect and finished at once as Justification is, there could be no renewing day by day, nor growth in grace, *perfectum est cui nihil deest, & cui nihil addi potest:* the *Apostle* indeed prays for the *Thessalonians*, that God would sanctifie them ὁλοτελεῖς —— wholly, perfectly, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. and this is matter of prayer and hope, for at last it will grow up to perfection; but this perfect holiness is reserved for the perfect state in the world to come, and none but *deluded proud spirits boast of it here: but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10. and upon the imperfection of the new.

* *Perfectio Sanctificationis in isthac vita non reperitur nisi in somniis quorundam fanaticorum. Amesius.*

new Creature in every faculty, that warfare and daily conflict spoken of *Gal.* 5. 17. and experienced by every Christian is grounded: grace rises gradually in the soul as the Sun doth in the heavens, *which shineth more and more unto a perfect day*, *Prov.* 4. 18.

Fifthly, To Conclude, this life with which the regenerate are quickened, is an *everlasting life*. *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 11. this principle of life, is the seed of God, and that remains in the soul for ever, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. it is no transient vanishing thing, but a fixed permanent principle, which abides in the soul for ever; a man may lose his *gifts*, but grace abides: the soul may and must be separated from the body, but grace cannot be separated from the soul: when all forsake us, this sticks by us.

This infused principle is therefore vastly different both from the extraordinary gifts of prophecie wherein the Spirit sometimes was said to come upon men, under the *old Testament*, 1 *Sam.* 10. 6, 10. and from the common vanishing effects he sometimes produceth in the unregenerate, of which we have frequent accounts in the *new Testament*, *Heb.* 6. 4. and *Joh.* 5. 35. it's one thing for the Spirit to come upon a man in the way of present influence and assistance, and another thing to dwell in a man as his Temple.

And thus of the nature and quality of this blessed work of the Spirit in quickening us.

Secondly, Having seen the nature and properties of the spiritual life, we are concerned in the next place to enquire into the way and manner in which it is wrought, and infused by the Spirit: and here we must say, 2.

First of all, That the work is wrought in the soul very *mysteriously*, so Christ tells *Nicodemus*, *Joh.* 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit*: there be many opinions among *Philosophers* about the original of winds, but we have no certain knowledge of it: we describe it by its effects and properties, but know little of its original: and if the works of God in nature be so abstruse and unsearchable, how much more are these sublime and supernatural works of the Spirit so?

We are not able to ſolve the *Phænomena* of nature, we can give no account of our own formation in the womb, *Eccleſ.* 11. 5. who can exactly deſcribe how the parts of the body are formed and the ſoul infuſed? *it's curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth,* as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 139. 16. but how we know not. *Baſil* ſaith divers queſtions may be moved about a *Fly*, which may poſe the greateſt *Philoſopher*: we know little of the forms and eſſences of natural things, much leſs of theſe profound, and abſtruſe ſpiritual things.

Secondly, But though we cannot pry into theſe ſecrets by the eye of reaſon, yet God hath revealed this to us in his word, that it is wrought by his own almighty power, *Eph.* 1. 19. The *Apoſtle* aſcribes this work to the exceeding greatneſs of the power of God: and this muſt needs be, if we conſider, how the Spirit of God expreſſes it in Scripture by a new Creation: (*i. e.*) a giving being to ſomething out of nothing, *Eph.* 2. 10. In this it differs from all the effects of humane power, for man always works upon ſome pre-exiſtent matter, but here is no ſuch matter: all that is in man, the ſubject of this work, is only a paſſive capacity or receptivity, but nothing is found in him to contribute towards this work: this ſupernatural life is not, nor can it be educed out of natural principles: this wholly tranſcends the Sphere of all natural power: but of this more anon.

Ab uno diſuper principio quod convenienter voluntati operatur dependent prima, ſecunda & tertia. Quemadmodum minima pars ferri lapidis magnetis ſpiritu movetur, per multos annulos ferreos extenſa: ita etiam qui ſunt virtute præditi, divino ſpiritu attracti, cum prima manſione conjungantur, deinceps autem alii uſque ad poſtremam. Clem. Alexan. Strom. lib. 7.

Thirdly, This alſo we may affirm of it, that this divine life is infuſed into all the natural faculties and powers of the ſoul, not one exempted. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. The whole ſoul and ſpirit is the recipient ſubject of it: and with reſpect to this general infuſion into all the faculties and powers of the ſoul, it's call'd a new creature, a new man, having an integral perfection and fullneſs of all its parts and members: it becomes light in the mind, *Joh.* 17. 3. obedience in the will, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. in the affections an heavenly temper and tenderneſs, *Col.* 3. 1, 2. and ſo is variouſly denominated, even as the Sea is from the ſeveral ſhores it waſhes, though it be one and the ſame Sea. And here we muſt obſerve lyes one main difference betwixt a regenerate ſoul, and an hypocrite; the one is all of a piece, as I may ſay, the principle of ſpiritual life runs into all and every faculty and affection; and ſanctifies or renews the whole

whole man: whereas the change upon hypocrites is but partial and particular, he may have new light, but no new love, a new tongue, but not a new heart: this or that vice may be reformed, but the whole course of his life is not altered.

Fourthly, and lastly, This infusion of spiritual life is done *instantaneously*, as all *Creation* work is: hence it is resembled to that *plastick power*, which in a moment made the light to shine out of darkness, just so doth God shine into our hearts, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6.

'Tis true, a soul may be a long time under the preparatory works of the Spirit, he may be under Convictions and humiliations, purposes and resolutions a long time, he may be waiting at the pool of *Bethesda*, attending the means and ordinances, but when the Spirit comes once to quicken the soul, it's done in a moment: even as it is in the infusion of the rational soul, the body is long ere it be prepared and moulded, but when once the *Embryo* or matter is ready, it's quickned with the Spirit of life in an instant: so it is here: but O what a blessed moment is this! upon which the whole weight of our eternal happiness depends; for it is Christ in us, (*i. e.*) Christ formed in us, who is the hope of glory, *Col.* 1. 27. and our Lord expresly tells us, *Joh.* 3. 3. that except we be regenerate and born again, we cannot see the Kingdome of God. And thus of the way and manner of its infusion.

Thirdly, Let the design and end of God in this his *quickening work* be next considered: for what end, and with what design and aim this work is wrought. And if we consult the Scriptures in this matter, we shall find this principle of life is infused in order to our glorifying God in this world by *a life of obedience*, and our enjoying of God in the world to come. 3.

First, Spiritual life is infused in Order to a course of obedience in this world, whereby God is glorified: so we read in *Eph.* 2. 10. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: habits are to actions, as the root is to the fruit, it is for fruit sake that we plant the roots, and ingraff the branches. So in *Ezek.* 36. 27. *a new spirit also will I put within you, and cause you*

you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgements and do them. This is the next or immediate deſign and end not only of the firſt infuſion of the principle of life into the Soul, but of all the exciting, actuating and aſſiſting works of the Spirit afterwards. Now this principle of ſpiritual life infuſed hath a twofold influence into obedience.

Firſt, This makes it ſincere and true obedience, when it flows from an inward vital principle of grace. The Hypocrite is moved by ſomething *ab extra*, from without, as the applauſe of men, the accommodation of fleſhly intereſts, the force of education, or if there be any thing from within that moves him, it is but a ſelf-intereſt, to quiet a grumbling Conſcience, and ſupport his vain hopes of heaven: but he never acts from a new principle, a new nature inclining him to holy actions. Sincerity mainly lyes in the harmony and correſpondency of actions to their principles: from this infuſed principle it is, that men hunger and thirſt for God, and go to their Duties, as men do to their meals, when they find an empty craving ſtomach.

O Reader, pauſe a little upon this ere thou paſs on, ask thy heart whether it be ſo with thee: are holy duties connatural to thee? doth thy ſoul move and work after God by a kind of ſupernatural inſtinct? this then will be to thee a good evidence of thy integrity.

Secondly, From this infuſed principle of life, reſults the *Excellency of our obedience*, as well as the ſincerity of it: for by vertue and reaſon thereof, it becomes *free* and voluntary, not forced and conſtrained, it drops like honey of its own accord out of the Comb, *Cant.* 4. 11. without ſqueezing: or as waters from the fountain without forcing, *Joh.* 4. 14. An unprincipled profeſſor muſt be ſqueez'd by ſome weight of affliction, ere he will yield one tear, or pour out a prayer, *Pſal.* 78. 34. *when he ſlew them, then they ſought him.*

Now the freedome of obedience is the excellency of it, Gods eye is much upon that, 1 *Cor.* 9.17. yea, and the *uniformity* of our obedience, which is alſo a ſpecial part of the beauty of it, reſults from hence: he that acts from a principle acts ſuently and uniformly, there is a proportion betwixt the parts of

of his Converſation: this is it which makes us holy ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, in all manner of Converſation, or in every creek and turning of our Converſations, as that word imports, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. whereas, he that is moved by this or that external accidental motive muſt needs be up and down, off and on, very uneven, *like the legs of a lame man*, as the expreſſion is, *Prov.* 26. 7. *which are not equal*: now a word of God, and then the diſcourſe runs muddy and prophane, or carnal again: all that evenneſs and uniformity that is in the ſeveral parts of a Chriſtians life, is the effect of this infuſed principle of ſpiritual life.

Thirdly, Another aim and deſign of God in the infuſion of this principle of life, is thereby to prepare and qualifie the ſoul for the enjoyment of himſelf in heaven: *except a man be born again he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*, *Joh.* 3. 3. all that ſhall poſſeſs that inheritance muſt be begotten again to it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. this principle of grace is the very ſeed of that glory, it's eternal life in the root and principle, *Joh.* 17. 3. by this the ſoul is attempered and qualified for that ſtate and imployment: what is the life of glory, but the viſion of God, and the ſouls aſſimilation to God by that viſion? from both which reſults that unſpeakable joy and delight which paſſeth underſtanding: but what viſion of God, aſſimilation to God, or delight in God can that ſoul have, which was never quickened with the ſupernatural principle of grace? The temper of ſuch ſouls is expreſſed in that ſad Character, *Zech.* 11. 8. *my ſoul loathed them, and their ſoul alſo abhorred me*: for want of this vital principle it is that the very ſame duties and ordinances which are the delights and higheſt pleaſures of the Saints, are no better than a meer drudgery and bondage to others, *Mal.* 1. 13. heaven would be no heaven to a dead ſoul; this principle of life in its daily growth and improvement is our meetneſs as well as our evidence for heaven: theſe are the main ends of its infuſion.

Fourthly, In the next place according to the method propoſed I am obliged to ſhew you, *that this quickening work is wholly ſupernatural*, it is the ſole and proper work of the Spirit of God. So Chriſt himſelf expreſsly aſſerts it in *Joh.* 3. 6, 8. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh, and that which is*

is born of the Spirit is Spirit: the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

Believers are the birth or off-spring of the Spirit, who produceth the new creature in them in an unintelligible manner even to themselves. So far it is above their own ability to produce, that it is above their capacity to understand the way of its production: as if you should ask, do you know from whence the wind comes? no: do you know whither it goes? no, but you hear and feel it when it blows? yes, why so is every one that is born of the Spirit: he feels the efficacy and discerns the effects of the Spirit on his own soul, but cannot understand or describe the manner of its production: this is not only above the carnal, but above the renewed mind to comprehend; we can contribute nothing, I mean *actively*, to the production of this principle of life: we may indeed be said to concur *passively* with the Spirit in it: that is, there is found in us a capacity, aptness, or receptiveness of this principle of life: our nature is endowed with such faculties and powers as are meet subjects to receive, and instruments to act this spiritual life: God only quickens the rational nature with spiritual life.

It is true also, that in the *progress of Sanctification* a man doth actively concurr with the Spirit, but in the first production of this spiritual principle he can do nothing: he can indeed perform those external duties that have a remote tendency to it, but he cannot by the power of nature perform any saving act, or contribute any thing more than a passive capacity to the implantation of a new principle: as will appear by the following Arguments.

Argument 1.

He that actively concurrs to his own regeneration, makes himself to differ; but this is denyed to all regenerate men, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?

Argument

Arg. 2.

That to which the Scripture aſcribes both *impotency* and *enmity* with reſpect to grace, cannot actively and of it ſelf concurr to the production of it: But the Scripture aſcribes both impotency and enmity to Nature with reſpect to grace. It denyes to it a power to do any thing of it ſelf, *Joh.* 15. 5. and which is leſs, it denies to it power to ſpeak a good word, *Matth.* 12. 34. and which is leaſt of all, it denies it power to think a good thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. This impotency if there were no more, cuts off all pretence of our active concurrence, but then if we conſider that it aſcribes *enmity* to our natures as well as *impotency*, how clear is the caſe! ſee *Rom.* 8. 7. the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: and *Col.* 1. 21. and you that were enemies in your minds by wicked works. So then Nature is ſo far productive of this principle, as impotency and enmity can enable it to be ſo.

Arg. 3.

That which is of natural production, muſt needs be ſubject to natural diſſolution, that which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh, a periſhing thing, for every thing is as its principle is, and there can be no more in the effect, than there is in the cauſe: but this principle of ſpiritual life is not ſubject to diſſolution, it is the water that ſprings up into everlaſting life, *Joh.* 4. 14. the ſeed of God which remaineth in the regenerate ſoul, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. and all this becauſe it's born not of corruptible, but of incorruptible ſeed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23.

Arg. 4.

If our new birth be our *reſurrection*, a *new creation*, yea, a *victory* over nature; then we cannot actively contribute to its production; but under all theſe notions it is repreſented to us in the Scriptures. It's our reſurrection from the dead, *Eph.* 5. 14. and you know the body is wholly paſſive in its reſurrection: but though it concurrs not, yet it gives pre-

exiſtent matter: therefore the metaphor is deſignedly varied, *Eph.* 4. 24. where it's call'd a *creation*: in which there is neither active concurrence, nor pre-exiſtent matter: but though Creation excludes pre-exiſtent matter, yet in producing ſomething out of nothing there is no reluctancy nor oppoſition; therefore to ſhew how purely ſupernatural this principle of life is, it is cloathed and preſented to us in the notion of a victory, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. and ſo leaves all to grace.

Arg. 5.

If nature could produce, or but actively concurr to the production of this ſpiritual life, then the beſt natures would be ſooneſt quickened with it; and the worſt natures not at all, or laſt and leaſt of all: but contrarily we find the worſt natures often regenerated, and the beſt left in the ſtate of ſpiritual death: with how many ſweet *homilitical* vertues was the young man adorned? *Mark* 10. 21. yet graceleſs: and what a ſink of ſin was *Mary Magdalen*, *Luke* 7. 37. yet ſanctified: thus beautiful *Rachel* is barren, whilſt blear-ey'd *Leah* bears children. And there is ſcarce any thing that affects and melts the hearts of Chriſtians more than this comparative conſideration doth: when they conſider veſſels of Gold caſt away, and leaden ones choſen for ſuch noble uſes. So that it's plain enough to all wiſe and humble ſouls, that this new life is wholly of ſupernatural production.

Fifthly, and laſtly, I ſhall briefly repreſent the neceſſary antecedency of this quickening work of the Spirit to our firſt cloſing with Chriſt by faith: and this will eaſily let it ſelf into your underſtandings if you but conſider the nature of the vital act of faith: which is the ſouls receiving of Chriſt and reſting upon him for pardon and ſalvation, in which two things are neceſſarily included, *viz.*

1. The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies.
2. The opening the heart fully to Jeſus Chriſt.

First,

First, The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies whatsoever. Self in all its acceptations, natural, sinful, and moral, is now to be denyed and renounced for ever, else Christ can never be received, *Rom.* 10. 3. not only self in its vilest *pollutions*, but self in its richest ornaments, and *endowments*: but this is as impossible to the unrenewed natural man, as it is for rocks or mountains to start from their *Centre*, and fly like wandering *Atomes* in the air: nature will rather choose to run the hazard of everlasting damnation, than escape it by a total renunciation of its beloved lusts, or self-righteousnes: this supernatural work necessarily requires a supernatural principle, *Rom.* 8. 2.

Secondly, The opening the heart fully to Jesus Christ, 2.
without which Christ can never be received, *Rev.* 3. 20. but this also is the effect of the quickening Spirit, the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus: sooner may we expect to see the flowers and blossoms open without the influence of the Sun, than the heart and will of a sinner open to receive Christ, without a principle of spiritual life first derived from him: and this will be past doubt to all that consider, not only the impotence of nature, but the ignorance, prejudice, and aversations of nature by which the door of the heart is barr'd and chain'd up against Christ, *Joh.* 5. 40. so that nature hath neither ability nor will, power or desire to come to Christ; if any have an heart open'd to receive him, 'tis the Lord that opens it, by his almighty power; and that in the way of an infused principle of life supernatural.

But here it may be doubted, and objected, against this po- *Quest.*
sition, If we cannot believe till we are quickened with spiritual life, as you say, and cannot be justified till we believe, as all say; then it will follow that a regenerate soul may be in the state of condemnation for a time, and consequently perish if death should befall him in that juncture.

To this I return, that when we speak of the priority of *Sol.*
this quickening work of the Spirit to our actual believing, we rather understand it of the priority of nature, than of time: the nature and order of the work requiring it to be so: a vital principle must in order of nature be infused before a vital act can be exerted. First make the tree good, and then

the fruit good: and admit we ſhould grant ſome priority in time alſo to this quickening principle, before actual faith, yet the abſurdity mentioned would be no way conſequent upon that conceſſion: for as the vital act of faith quickly follows the regenerating principle, ſo the ſoul is abundantly ſecured againſt the danger objected; God never beginning any ſpecial work of grace upon the ſoul, and then leaving it and the ſoul with it in hazzard, but preſerves both to the finiſhing and compleating of his gracious deſign, *Phil.* 1. 6.

Firſt Uſe of Information.

Infer. 1.

Infer. 1.

If ſuch be the nature and neceſſity of this principle of divine life, as you have heard it opened in the foregoing diſcourſe, then hence it follows, *That unregenerate men are no better than dead men.* So the Text repreſents them, you hath he quickened who were *dead* in treſpaſſes and ſins: (*i. e.*) ſpiritually dead though naturally alive, yea and lively too as any other perſons in the world. There is a threefold conſideration of objects,

Viz. { 1. Naturally. 2. Politically. 3. Theologically.

Firſt, Naturally, to all thoſe things that are natural, they are alive: they can underſtand, reaſon, diſcourſe, project and contrive as well as others, they can eat, drink, build, plant, and ſuck out the natural comfort of theſe things as much as any others. So their life is deſcribed, *Job* 21. 12. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ: they ſpend their dayes in Wealth, &c.* and *James* 5. 5. *ye have lived in pleaſure upon earth,* as the fiſh lives in the water its natural element, and yet this natural ſenſual life is not allowed the name of life, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. ſuch perſons are *dead whilſt they live*: 'tis a baſe and ignoble life, to have a ſoul only to ſalt the body, or to enable a man for

for a few years to eat, and drink, and talk, and laugh, and then dye.

Secondly, Objects may be considered *Politically*, and with respect to such things they are alive also: they can buy and sell, and manage all their worldly affairs with as much dexterity, skill, and policy as other men, yea, *the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light*, *Luke* 16. 8. The intire stream of their thoughts, projects and studies running in that one Channel: having but one design to manage, they must needs excel in worldly wisdom: but then

Liberet me deus, ab homine unius tantum negotii. Bern.

Thirdly, *Theologically* considered, they are dead; without life, sense or motion towards God, and the things that are above: their understandings are dead, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. and cannot receive the things that are of God: their wills are dead, and cannot move towards Jesus Christ, *Joh.* 6. 65. their affections are dead, even to the most excellent and spiritual objects: and all their duties are dead duties, without life or spirit. This is the sad case of the unregenerate world.

Infer. 2.

Infer. 2. *This speaks encouragement to Ministers and parents to wait in hopes of success at last, even upon those that yet give them little hope of conversion at the present*: the work you see is the Lords, when the Spirit of life comes upon their dead souls, they shall believe, and be made willing; till then, we do but plough upon the rocks: yet let not our hand slack in duty, pray for them and plead with them; you know not in which prayer or exhortation the Spirit of life may breathe upon them: *can these dry bones live?* yes, if the Spirit of life from God breathe upon them, they can, and shall live: what though their dispositions be averse to all things that are spiritual and serious? yet even such have been regenerated, when more sweet and promising natures have been passed by and left under spiritual death.

It was the observation of Mr. *Ward* upon his Brother Mr. *Daniel Rogers*, (who was a man of great gifts and emi-

eminent graces, yet of a very bad temper and conſtitution) Though my Brother *Rogers* (ſaid he) have grace enough for two men, yet not half enough for himſelf.

It may be you have pray'd and ſtriven long with your relations and to little purpoſe, yet be not diſcouraged. How often was Mr. *John Rogers* that famous ſucceſsful Divine, a grief of heart to his relations in his younger years, proving a wild and lewd young man to the great diſcouragement of his pious friends; yet at laſt, the Lord graciouſly changed him, ſo that Mr. *Richard Rogers* would ſay, when he would exerciſe the utmoſt degree of charity or hope for any that at preſent were vile and naught, *I will never deſpair of any man for* John Rogers *ſake.*

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3. *How honourable are Chriſtians by their new birth! they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God, Joh.* 1. 13. (*i. e.*) not in an impure, or meer natural way, but in a moſt ſpiritual and ſupernatural manner: they are the off-ſpring of God, the children of the moſt high, as well by regeneration as by adoption: which is the greateſt advancement of the humane nature next to its hypoſtatical union with the ſecond perſon: Oh what honour is this for a poor ſinful creature to have the very life of God breathed into his ſoul! all other dignities of nature are trifles compar'd with this: this makes a Chriſtian a ſacred hallowed thing, the living temple of God, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. the ſpecial object of his delight.

Infer. 4.

Infer. 4. *How deplorable is the condition of the unregenerate world, in no better caſe than dead men!* Now to affect our hearts with the miſery of ſuch a condition, let ut conſider and compare it in the following particulars.

First,

First, There is no *beauty* in the dead, all their loveliness goes away at death; there is no spiritual beauty or loveliness in any that are unregenerate: 'tis true, many of them have excellent moral *homilitical vertues*, which adorn their conversations in the eyes of men; but what are all these, but so many sweet flowers strewed over a dead Corpse?

Secondly, The dead have no *pleasure* nor delight: even so the unregenerate are incapable of the delights of the Christian life: *to be spiritually minded is life and peace, Rom.* 8. 6. (*i.e.*) this is the only serene, placid, and pleasant life: when the *prodigal* who was once dead, was alive, then he began to be merry, *Luke* 15. 24. they live in sensual pleasures, but this is to be dead while alive in Scripture reckoning.

Thirdly, The dead have no *heat*, they are as cold as clay: so are all the unregenerate towards God and things above: their *lusts* are *hot*, but their *affections* to God *cold* and frozen: that which makes a gracious heart *melt*, will not make an unregenerate heart move.

Fourthly, The dead must be *buried, Gen.* 23. 4. *bury my dead out of my sight*: so must the unregenerate be buried out of Gods sight for ever: buried in the lowest hell, in the place of darkness for ever, *Joh.* 3. 3. Woe to the unregenerate, good had it been for them they had never been born.

Infer. 4.

How greatly are all men concerned to examine their condition with respect to spiritual life and death! It's very common for men to presume upon their Union with and interest in Christ: this priviledge is by common mistake extended generally to all that profess Christian religion, and practise the external duties of it, when in truth no more are or can be united to Christ than are quickened by the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. O try your interest in Christ by this rule, if I am quickened by Christ, I have Union with Christ. And *Infer.* 5.

Præsumendo sperant, & sperando perunt. Ames.

First, If there be spiritual *sense* in your souls, there is spiritual life in them: there are αἰσθητικὰ senses belonging to the spiritual, as well as to the animal life, *Heb.* 5. 14. they can feel and sensibly groan under soul pressures, and burdens of sin,

ſin, *Rom.* 7. 24. the dead feel not, moan not under the burdens of ſin, but the living do: they may be ſenſible indeed of the evil of ſin with reſpect to themſelves, but not as againſt God, damnation may ſcare them, but pollution doth not; hell may fright them, but not the offence of God.

Secondly, If there be ſpiritual *hunger and thirſt*, it's a ſweet ſign of ſpiritual life; this ſign agrees to Chriſtians of a day old, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. even *new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word:* if ſpiritual life be in you, you know how to expound that Scripture, *Pſal.* 42. 1. without any other interpreter than your own experience: you will feel ſomewhat like the gnawing of an empty ſtomach, making you reſtleſs during the interruption of your daily communion with the Lord.

Thirdly, If there be *ſpiritual conflicts* with ſin, there is ſpiritual life in your ſoul, *Gal.* 5. 17. not only a combat betwixt *light* in the higher, and *luſt* in the lower faculties: nor only oppoſition to more groſs external corruptions that carry more infamy and horror with them than other ſins do: but the ſame faculty will be the ſeat of War; and the more inward, ſecret and ſpiritual any luſt is, by ſo much the more will it be oppoſed and mourned over.

In a word, the weakeſt Chriſtian may upon impartial obſervation find ſuch ſigns of ſpiritual life in himſelf (if he will allow himſelf time to reflect upon the bent and frame of his own heart) as deſires after God, conſcience of duties, fears, cares, and ſorrows about ſin: delight in the ſociety of heavenly and ſpiritual men, a loathing and burden in the company of vain and carnal perſons.

Ob. O but I have a very dead heart to ſpiritual things.

Sol. 'Tis a ſign of life that you feel and are ſenſible of that deadneſs: and beſide, there's a great deal of difference betwixt ſpiritual deadneſs and death: the one is the *ſtate* of the unregenerate, the other is the *diſeaſe* of regenerate men.

Ob. Some ſigns of ſpiritual life are clear to me, but I cannot cloſe with others.

Sol. If you can really cloſe with any, it may ſatisfie you, though you be dark in others: if a child can't go, yet if it can ſuck; if it can't ſuck, if it can cry; if it can't cry, yet if it breath it is alive.

THE

The Sixth SERMON.

Serm. 6.

JOH. 1. 12.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name.

Describing that Act on our part by which we do actually and effectually apply Christ to our own souls.

NO sooner is the soul quickened by the Spirit of God, but it answers in some measure the end of God in that work, by its *active reception of Jesus Christ, in the way of believing*: what this vital act of faith is, upon which so great a weight depends, as our Interest in Christ and everlasting blessedness, this Scripture before us will give you the best account of it: wherein (omitting the Coherence and contexture of the words) we have three things to ponder.

First, The high and glorious priviledge conferr'd, *viz. power to become the sons of God.*

Secondly, The subject of this priviledge described, *As many as received him.*

Thirdly, The description explain'd by way of *Apposition, even as many as believed on his name.*

1.

Beza, *hoc jus:* Piscator, *hanc dignitatem:* Lightfoote, *prærogativam.* Heinsius, *privilegium: nec multo aliter voce ἐξουσίας Hellenistæ usi videntur cum Chaldæorum* שלטן *expresserunt.* Heins.

First, The priviledge conferr'd is a very high and glorious one, than which no created being is capable of greater: *power to become the sons of God:* this word ἐξουσίαν is of large extent and signification, and is by some rendred *this right*, by others *this dignity*, by others this *prerogative.* This *priviledge* or honour: it implys a title or right to *Adoption*, not only with respect to the present benefits of it in this life, but also to that blessed inheritance which is laid up in heaven for the sons of God: and so *Gratius* rightly expounds it of our *consummate* sonship, consisting in the actual enjoyment of blessedness, as well as that which is *inchoate*: not only a right to pardon, favour and acceptance now, but to heaven, and the full enjoyment of God hereafter. O what an honour, dignity, and priviledge is this!

2.

Secondly, The Subjects of this priviledge are described: *as many as received him.* This Text describes them by that very grace, *Faith*, which gives them their title and right to Christ and his benefits; and by that very *act* of faith which primarily conferrs their right to his person, and *secondarily* to his benefits, *viz. receiving him*: there be many graces besides faith, but faith only is the grace that gives us right to Christ: and there be many acts of faith besides receiving, but this receiving or embracing of Christ is the justifying and saving act: as many as received him, ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτὸν] *as many*, be they of any nation, sex, age, or condition. For *there is neither Greek, nor Jew, Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free: but Christ is all, and in all. Col.* 3. 11.

λαμβάνειν & παραλαμβάνειν *idem est.* Grot.

Nothing but unbelief barrs men from Christ and his benefits: as many as *received him*] the word signifies to accept, take, or (as we fitly render) to receive, assume or take to us, a word most aptly expressing the nature and office of faith, yea the very justifying and saving act: and we are also heedfully to note its special object, ἔλαβον αὐτὸν *him*, the Text saith not αὐτὰ *his*, but αὐτὸν *him* (*i. e.*) his person, as he is cloathed with his offices, and not only his benefits and priviledges. These are secondary and consequential things to our *receiving him.* *So that it is a receiving, assuming or accepting the

* *Oblatio est actio Dei, plerunque mediata facta in verbo; receptio est actio hominis, ita tamen ut simul quoque sit beneficium dei; nec enim homo posset recipere mediatorem nisi fidei, quæ receptionis hujus est organon, à deo daretur.* Wendel.

Lord;

Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which muſt have reſpect to the tenders and propoſals of the goſpel, for *therein is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith*, *Rom.* 1. 17. therein is Jeſus Chriſt revealed, propoſed, and offered unto ſinners as the only way of juſtification and ſalvation, which Goſpel offer (as before was opened) is therefore ordinarily neceſſary to believing, *Rom.* 10. 11, 12, 13, *&c.*

Thirdly, This deſcription is yet further explained, by this additional exegetical clauſe, *even to them that believe in his name*] here the terms are varied, though the thing expreſt in both be the ſame: what he call'd *receiving* there, is call'd *believing* on his name here, to ſhew us that the very eſſence of ſaving faith conſiſts in our receiving of Chriſt: by *his name*, we are to underſtand Chriſt himſelf: it is uſual to take theſe two, believing in him, and believing in his name, as terms convertible and of the ſame importance. הוא שמו ושמו הוא *ipſe eſt nomen ſuum, & nomen ejus ipſe eſt*: his name is himſelf and himſelf is his name. So that here we have the true nature, and precious benefits of ſaving faith excellently expreſt in this Scripture: the ſumm of which take in this propoſition. 3. *Druſius.*

Doct.

That the receiving of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is that ſaving and vital act of faith, which gives the ſoul right both to his perſon and benefits. *Doct.*

We cannot act ſpiritually, till we begin to live ſpiritually: therefore the Spirit of life muſt firſt joyn himſelf to us in his quickening work, (as was ſhewn you in the laſt Sermon) which being done, we begin to act ſpiritually by taking hold upon, or receiving Jeſus Chriſt, which is the thing deſigned to be opened in this Sermon.

The ſoul is the life of the body, faith is the life of the ſoul, and Chriſt is the life of faith. There are ſeveral ſorts of faith beſides ſaving faith, and in ſaving faith there are ſeveral acts beſides the juſtifying or ſaving act; but *this receiving act* which is to be our ſubject this day, is that upon which both our righteouſneſs and eternal happineſs do depend. This as a *form* differences ſaving faith from all other kinds or ſorts of faith: by this it is that we are juſtified and ſaved. *To as many as re-*

Forma vel aliquid formæ analogum ponitur differentiæ loco.

ceived him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God: yet it doth not justifie and save us by reason of any *proper dignity* that is found in this Act, but by reason of the *object* it receives and apprehends: the same thing is often exprest in Scripture by other terms, as *coming to Christ*, *Joh.* 6. 35. *rolling* or staying upon Christ, *Isa.* 50. 10. but whatever is found in those expressions it is all comprehended in this, as will appear hereafter. Now, the method into which I shall cast the discourse of this subject, that I may handle it with as much perspicuity and profit as I can, shall be

1. First, To explain and open the nature of this *receiving* of Christ and shew you what it includes.

2. Secondly, To prove that this is the justifying and saving act of faith.

3. Thirdly, To shew you the excellency of this act of Faith.

4. Fourthly, To remove some mistakes, and give you the true account of the dignity and excellency of this act.

5. Fifthly, And then bring home all in a proper and close application.

(1.) First, In the first place then, I will endeavour to explain and open the nature of this *receiving of Christ*, and shew you what is implyed in it.

There are divers other expressions by which the nature of saving faith is exprest in Scripture, *viz.* eating Christs flesh, and drinking his blood, *Joh.* 6. 40. coming to Christ, *Mat.* 11. 28. Having the son, 1 *Joh.* 5. 12. Trusting or depending upon him, for which the Hebrew use three emphatical words, חסה ו אמן בטח The first signifies a firm and stable trust. The second to lean or depend with security. The third to betake ones self to a sanctuary for protection: all which is supposed or included in our receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ: in eating and drinking we must receive meat and drink, coming to Christ is necessarily supposed in receiving him, for there is no receiving at a distance: Having the son, and receiving him are notions of the same importance; and for trusting, relying with security, and betaking our selves to Christ for refuge, they are all involved in the receiving act: for as God offers him to us as the only prop of our hearts and hopes, so we receive him to rely upon him; and as he is held forth in the Gospel as the only *Asylum* or *City* of refuge, so we take or receive him, and accordingly betake our souls to him for refuge.

And indeed it involves many deep mysteries and things of greatest weight: people are generally very ignorant and unacquainted with the importance of this expression, they have very sleight thoughts of faith, who never past under the illuminating, convincing and humbling work of the Spirit: but we shall find that saving faith is quite another thing, and differs in its whole kind and nature from that traditional faith, and common assent, which is so fatally mistaken for it in the world.

For

For First, It is evident, that no man can receive Jesus Christ in the darkness of natural ignorance: we must understand and discern who and what he is, whom we receive to be the Lord our righteousness. If we know not his person and his offices, we do not *take*, but mistake Christ. It's a good rule in the *Civil Law*, *non consentit qui non sentit*: a mistake of the person invalidates the match: he that takes Christ for a meer man, or denys the satisfaction of his blood, or devests him of his humane nature, or denys any of his most glorious and necessary offices, let them cry up as high as they will, his spirituality, glory, and exemplary life and death; they can never receive Jesus Christ aright: this is such a crack, such a flaw in the very foundation of faith, as undoes and destroys all: *ignorantis non est consensus*: all saving faith is founded in light and knowledge: and therefore it's called knowledge, *Isa.* 53. 11. and *seeing* is inseparably connected with *believing*, *Joh.* 6. 40. men must hear and learn of the father before they can come to Christ, *Joh.* 6. 45. the receiving act of faith is directed and guided by knowledge. I will not presume to state the degree of knowledge, which is absolutely necessary to the reception of Christ, I know the first of actings faith are in most Christians accompanied with much darkness and confusion of understanding: but yet we must say in the general, that where-ever faith is, there is so much light as is sufficient to discover to the soul, its own sins, dangers, and wants; and the all-sufficiency, suitableness, and necessity of Christ for the supply and remedy of all; and without this Christ cannot be received. *Come unto me ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, *Mat.* 11. 28.

Secondly, The receiving Christ necessarily implies the *Assent* of the understanding to the truths of Christ revealed in the Gospel, *viz.* his person, natures, offices, his incarnation, death and satisfaction; which *assent*, though it be not in it self saving faith, yet is it the foundation and groundwork of it: it being impossible the soul should receive and fiducially embrace, what the mind doth not *assent* unto as true and infallibly certain. Now there are three degrees of *assent*, *conjecture*, *opinion*, and *belief*. *Conjecture* is but a slight, and weak inclination to assent to the thing propounded, by reason

Vide Dr. Sclater in *Rom.* 4. 3.

ſon of the weighty objections that lye againſt it. *Opinion* is a more ſteady and fixed aſſent, when a man is almoſt certain, though yet ſome fear of the contrary remains with him. *Belief* is a more full and aſſured aſſent to the truth, to which the mind may be brought four ways.

Firſt, By the perfect intelligence of ſenſe, not hindered or deceived. So I believe the truth of theſe propoſitions, Fire is hot: water moiſt: honey is ſweet: gall is bitter.

Secondly, By the native clearneſs of ſelf-evidencing principles. So I believe the truth of theſe propoſitions, The whole is more than a part: the cauſe is before the effect.

Thirdly, By diſcourſe, and rational deduction. So I believe the truth of this propoſition, Where all the parts of a thing are, there is the whole.

Fourthly, By infallible Teſtimony, when any thing is witneſſed or aſſerted, by one whoſe truth is unqueſtionable: and of this ſort is the aſſent of faith: which is therefore call'd our receiving the witneſs of God, 1 *Joh.* 5. 9. our ſetting to our Seal that God is true, *Joh.* 3. 33. This *prima veritas*, divine veracity is the very *formal object* of faith: into this we reſolve our faith. *Thus ſaith the Lord*, is that firm foundation upon which our aſſent is built: and thus we ſee good reaſon to believe thoſe profound myſteries of the incarnation of Chriſt, the Hypoſtatical Union of the two natures in his wonderful perſon, the *myſtical* Union of Chriſt and believers, though we cannot underſtand theſe things by reaſon of the darkneſs of our minds. It ſatisfies the ſoul to find theſe myſteries in the written word, upon that foundation it firmly builds its aſſent: and without ſuch an aſſent of faith, there can be no embracing of Chriſt: all acts of faith and religion without aſſent, are but as ſo many Arrows ſhot at randome into the open air, they ſignifie nothing for want of a fixed determinate object.

Nec enim decebat ut cum deus ad homines loqueretur argumentis aſſereret ſuas voces, tanquam aliter fides ei non haberetur: ſed ut oportuit eſt locutus, quaſi rerum omnium maximus judex, cujus eſt non argumentari, ſed pronunciare verum, &c. Lactantius de falſa religione p. (mihi) 179.

Titubat fides ubi vacillat divinarum Scripturarum autoritas. Aug.

It is therefore the policy of *Satan*, by injecting or fomenting Atheiſtical thoughts (with which young Converts uſe to find themſelves greatly infeſted) to undermine and deſtroy the whole work of faith: but God makes his people victorious over them: yea, and even at that time they do aſſent to the truths of the word, when they think they do not:

as

as appears by their tenderneſs and fear of ſin, their diligence and care of duty: If I diſcern theſe things in a Chriſtians life, he muſt excuſe me if I believe him not, when he ſaith he doth not aſſent to the truths of the Goſpel.

Thirdly, our receiving Chriſt neceſſarily implies our hearty *approbation*, liking, and eſtimation, yea, the acquieſcence of our very ſouls in Jeſus Chriſt, as the moſt excellent, ſuitable and compleat remedy for all our wants, ſins and dangers that ever could be prepared by the wiſdome and love of God for them: we muſt receive him with ſuch a frame of heart as reſts upon him, truſts to and relys upon him, if ever we receive him aright: *to them that believe he is precious*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. this is the only ſoveraign plaiſter in all the world that is large enough, and efficacious enough to cure our wounds: and therefore as Chriſt is moſt highly eſteemed, and heartily approved as the only remedy for our ſouls, ſo the ſoveraign grace and wiſdome of God are admired, and the way and method he hath taken to ſave poor loſt ſouls by Jeſus Chriſt moſt heartily approved; as the moſt apt and excellent method, both for his glory and our good, that ever could be taken: for 'tis a plain caſe, that none will eſpouſe themſelves with conjugal affections to that perſon whom they eſteem not as the beſt for them that can be choſen: none will forſake and quit all for his ſake, except they account him as the ſpouſe did, *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand*, *Cant.* 5. 10.

There are two things in Chriſt which muſt gain the greateſt approbation in the ſoul of a poor convinced ſinner, and bring it to reſt upon Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, That it can find nothing in Chriſt that is diſtaſtful or unſuitable to it, as it doth experimentally find in the beſt creatures. In him is no *weakneſs* but a fulneſs of all ſaving abilities; *able to ſave to the uttermoſt*: no *Pride* cauſing him to ſcorn and contemn the moſt wretched ſoul that comes to him: no *inconſtancy* or levity, to cauſe him to caſt off the ſoul whom he hath once received: no *paſſion*, but a *Lamb* for meekneſs and patience: there is not a ſpot to be found in him, but *he is altogether lovely*, *Cant.* 5. 16.

Secondly, As the believer can find nothing in Chriſt that is diſtaſtful, ſo it finds nothing wanting in Chriſt that is neceſſary;

ceſſary or deſirable: ſuch is the fulneſs of wiſdome, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption that is in Chriſt, that nothing is left to deſire, but the full enjoyment of him. O ſaith the ſoul, how compleatly happy ſhall I be, if I can but win Chriſt! I would not envy the *Nobles* of the earth, were I but in Chriſt. I am an hungry and a thirſt, and Chriſt is meat indeed, and drink indeed; this is the beſt thing in all the world for me, becauſe ſo neceſſary, and ſo ſuitable to the needs of a ſoul ready to periſh. I am a law-condemned, and a ſelf-condemned ſinner; trembling for fear of the execution of the curſe upon me every moment; in Chriſt is compleat righteouſneſs to juſtifie my ſoul; O there is nothing better for me than Chriſt. I ſee my ſelf plunged both in nature and practice into the odious pollutions of ſin, and in Chriſt is a fountain opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs: his blood is a fountain of *merit*, his ſpirit a fountain of holineſs and *purity*: none but Chriſt, none but Chriſt. O the manifold wiſdome and unſearchable love of God to prepare, and furniſh ſuch a Chriſt, ſo fully anſwering all the needs, all the diſtreſſes, all the fears and burdens of a poor ſinner! Thus the believing ſoul approves of Chriſt as beſt for it. And thus in believing it gives glory to God, *Rom.* 4. 20.

Fourthly, Receiving Chriſt conſiſts in the *conſent and choice of the will*: and this is the opening of the heart, the opening and ſtretching forth of the ſoul to receive him: *thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*, *Pſal.* 110. 3.

'Tis the great deſign and main ſcope of the Goſpel to work over the wills of poor ſinners to this: and this was the great complaint of Chriſt againſt the incredulous Jews, *Joh.* 5. 40. *ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.*

It is diſputed by ſome whether faith can be ſeated in two diſtinct faculties, as we ſeem to place it, when we ſay it involves both the *approbation* of the *judgement*, and the *conſent* of the *will*. I will not here intangle my diſcourſe with that fruitleſs diſpute. I am of the ſame judgement with thoſe Divines that think Faith cannot be expreſſed fully by any one ſingle habit or act of the mind or will diſtinctly, for that (as one well

well notes) there are ſuch deſcriptions given of it in Scripture, ſuch things are propoſed as the object of it, and ſuch is the experience of all that ſincerely believe; as no one ſingle act either of the mind or will can anſwer unto: nor do I ſee any thing repugnant to *Scripture* or *Philoſophy*, if we place it in both faculties. Conſent (ſaith *Vaſquez*) ſeems to denote the concourſe of the will with the underſtanding: but to leave that, it is moſt certain, the ſaving juſtifying act of faith lies principally in the conſent of the will, which conſent is the effect of the almighty power of God, *Eph.* 1. 19. he allures and draws the will to Chriſt, and he *draws with the cords of a man*, (*i. e.*) he prevails with it by rational Arguments: for the ſoul being prepared by convictions of its loſt and miſerable eſtate by ſin, and that there is but one door of hope open to it for an eſcape from the wrath to come, and that is Chriſt: being alſo ſatisfied of the fulneſs and compleatneſs of his ſaving ability, and of his willingneſs to make it over for our ſalvation upon ſuch juſt and equal terms; this cannot but prevail with the will of a poor diſtreſſed ſinner, to conſent and chuſe him.

Dr. *Owen* in his Doctrine of Juſtification, *p.* 135. *Conſenſus denotare videtur concurſum voluntatis cum intellectu, ad ſentiendum idem quod intellectus ſentit.* 12 Q. 15. a. 1. *Fides non eſt virtus ſimplex, ſed diverſis conſtat partibus, notitia, aſſenſu, & fiducia, quæ ad eandem potentiam non pertinent.* Wendelini Theol. p. 450.

Fifthly, and Laſtly, The laſt and principal thing included in our receiving of Chriſt, is the *reſpect* that this act of acceptance hath, unto the terms upon which Chriſt is tendred to us in the Goſpel, to which it is moſt agreeable, 1 *Cor.* 15. 11. *ſo we preach, and ſo ye believed*: faith anſwers the Goſpel offer as the impreſs upon the *wax* doth the engravings in the *Seal*: and this is of principal conſideration, for there is no receiving Chriſt upon any other terms but his own, propoſed in the Goſpel to us: he will never come lower, nor make them eaſier than they are, for any mans ſake in the world: we muſt either receive him upon theſe, or part with him for ever as thouſands do, who could be content to agree to ſome Articles, but rather chooſe to be damned for ever, than ſubmit to all: this is the great controverſie betwixt Chriſt and ſinners: upon this many thouſands break off the Treaty, and part with Chriſt; becauſe he will not come to their terms: but every true believer receives him upon his own, (*i. e.*) their acceptance of him by faith is in all things conſentaneous to the overtures made of him in the written word. So he tenders himſelf, and ſo they receive him;

Rom. 6. 17. ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς. The will like melted metal is delivered into the Goſpel mould, where it receives the ſame form and figure that the mould gives.

him; as will be evident in the following particulars.

1. First, The Gospel offers Christ to us *sincerely* and really, and so the true believer receives and accepts him: even with a *faith unfeigned*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. If ever the soul be serious and in earnest in any thing, it it so in this: can we suppose the heart of him that flys for his life to the *refuge City*, to be serious and in earnest to escape by flight the *Avenger of blood* who pursues him, then is the heart of a convinced sinner serious in this matter; for under that notion is the work of faith presented to us, *Heb.* 6. 18.

2. Secondly, Christ is offered to us in the Gospel *intirely* and *undividedly*, as cloathed with all his offices, Priestly, Prophetical, and Regal: as Christ Jesus the Lord, *Acts* 16. 31. and so the true believer receives him: the *hypocrite* like the harlot is for dividing, but the sincere believer finds the need he hath of every office of Christ, and knows not how to want any thing that is in him.

His ignorance makes him necessary and desirable to him, as a *Prophet*: His guilt makes him necessary as a *Priest*: His strong and powerful Lusts and Corruptions makes him necessary as a *King*: and in truth he sees not any thing in Christ that he can spare; he needs all that is in Christ, and admires the infinite wisdome in nothing more than the investing Christ with all these offices, which are so suited to the poor sinners wants and miseries. Look as the three offices are undivided in Christ, so they are in the believers acceptance: and before this tryal, no hypocrite can stand, for all hypocrites reject and quarrel with something in Christ: they like his pardon, better than his government: they call him indeed Lord and master, but it is but an empty Tite they bestow upon him; for let them ask their own hearts, if Christ be Lord over their *thoughts*, as well as *words*: over their *secret*, as well as *open* actions: over their *darling* Lusts, as well as others: let them ask, who will appear to be Lord and master over them, when Christ and the world come in competition? when the pleasures of sin shall stand upon one side, and sufferings to death, and deepest points of self-denyal upon the other side? Surely 'tis the greatest affront that can be offered to the divine wisdome and goodness to separate in our acceptance, what is so

united

united in Christ for our salvation and happiness. As without any one of these offices the work of our salvation could not be compleated, so without acceptance of Christ in them all, our Union with him by faith cannot be compleated.

The Gospel offer of Christ includes all his offices, and Gospel faith just so receives him, to submit to him, as well as to be redeemed by him: to imitate him in the holiness of his life, as well as to reap the purchases and fruits of his *death*. It must be an entire receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Christ is offered to us in the Gospel *exclusively*, as the alone and only saviour of sinners; with whose blood and intercession nothing is to be mixed: but the soul of a sinner is singly to rely and depend on him and no other. *Acts* 4. 2. 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. and so faith receives him, *Psal.* 71. 16. *I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.* *Phil.* 3. 9. *And be found in him not having my own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ:* to depend partly upon Christs righteousness, and partly upon our own, is to set one foot upon a rock, and the other in a quick-sand: either Christ will be to us all in all, or nothing at all in point of righteousness and salvation: he affects not social honour: as he did the whole *work*, so he expects the sole *praise*: if he be not able to save to the uttermost, why do we depend upon him at all? and if he be, why do we lean upon any beside him?

3. A man may as lawfully joyn Saints or Angels in his mediation with Christ, as graces. It is gross idolatry to make the works of God a God: and it is but a more subtil Idolatry to make the works of Christ a Christ. *Burges de Lege.*

Fourthly, The Gospel offers Christ *freely* to sinners as the *gift*, not the *sale* of God, *Joh.* 4. 10. *Isa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 17. and even so faith receives him. The believer comes to Christ with an empty hand, not only as an undeserving, but as an hell deserving sinner: he comes to Christ as to one that justifies the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. *Unto him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness:* where by him that worketh not, he means a convinced humbled sinner, who finds himself utterly unable to do the task the Law sets him (*i. e.*) perfectly to obey it; and therefore in a Law sense is said not to work: for it's all one as to the intent and purpose of the Law not to work and not to work perfectly: this he is convinced of, and therefore comes to Christ as one that is in himself ungodly, acknowledging the righteousness by which he alone can stand before

God; is in Christ, and not in himself, in whole, or in part: and by the way, let this encourage poor souls that are scared and daunted for want of due qualifications, from closing with and embracing Christ: there is nothing qualifies any man for Christ more than a sense of his unworthiness of him, and the want of all excellencies or ornaments that may commend him to divine acceptance.

5. Fifthly, The Gospel offers Christ *orderly* to sinners, first his *person*, then his *priviledges*. God first gives his son, and then with him, or as a consequent of that gift; he gives us all things, *Rom.* 8. 32. In the same order must our faith receive him. The believer doth not marry the *portion* first, and then the *person*: but to be found in him is the first and great care of a believer.

I deny not but it's lawful for any to have an eye to the benefits of Christ. Salvation from wrath is, and lawfully may be intended and aimed at: *look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the earth, Isa.* 45. 22. Nor do I deny but there are many poor souls who being in deep distress and fear, may and often do look mostly to their own safety at first; and that there is much confusion as well in the actings of their faith, as in their condition; but sure I am it is the proper order in believing, first to accept the person of the Lord Jesus: heaven is no doubt very desirable, but Christ is more: *whom have I in heaven but thee? Psal.* 73. 25. Union with Christ is in order of nature antecedent to the Communication of his priviledges, therefore so it ought to be in the order and method of believing.

6. Sixthly, Christ is *Advisedly* offered in the Gospel to sinners, as the result of Gods eternal counsel, a project of grace upon which his heart and thoughts have been much set, *Zech.* 6. 13. The counsel of peace was betwixt the Father and Son. And so the believer receives him, most deliberately weighing the matter in his most deep and serious thoughts: for this is a time of much solitude and thoughtfulness. The souls espousals are acts of judgement, *Hosea* 2. 19. on our part, as well as on Gods: we are therefore bid to sit down and count the cost, *Luke* 14. 28. Faith, or the actual receiving of Christ is the result of many previous debates in the soul: the matter hath been ponder'd over and over: the objections and dis-

discouragements both from the self-denying terms of the Gospel, and our own vileness and deep guilt have been ruminated, and lain upon our hearts day and night, and after all things have been ballanced in the most deep consideration, the soul is determined to this conclusion, I must have Christ be the terms never so hard, be my sins never so great and many, I will yet go to him and venture my soul upon him; if I perish I perish. I have thought out all my thoughts, and this is the result, union with Christ here, or separation from God for ever must be my lot.

And thus doth the Lord open the hearts of his elect, and win the consent of their wills to receive Jesus Christ upon the deepest consideration, and debate of the matter in their own most solemn thoughts: they understand and know that they must deeply deny themselves, take up his cross and follow him, *Matth.* 16. 24. renounce not only *sinful* but *religious* self; these are hard and difficult things, but yet the necessity and excellency of Christ makes them appear eligible, and rational: by all which you see faith is another thing than what the sound of that word (as it is generally understood) signifies to the understandings of most men. This is that fiducial receiving of Christ here to be opened.

Secondly, Our next work will be to evince this receiving of Christ as it hath been opened, to be that special saving faith of Gods elect: this is that faith of which such great and glorious things are spoken in the Gospel, which whosoever hath shall be saved, and he that hath it not shall be damned: and this I shall evidently prove by the following Arguments or reasons. 2.

Arg. 1.

First, That faith which gives the soul right and title to spiritual Adoption, with all the priviledges and benefits thereof, is true saving Faith. *Arg.* 1.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, gives the soul right and title to spiritual Adoption, with all the priviledges and benefits thereof.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, is true and saving faith.

The

The Major proposition is undeniable, for our right and title to spiritual Adoption and the priviledges thereof rises from our Union with Jesus Christ; we being united to the son of God, are by vertue of that Union reckon'd or accounted sons. *Gal.* 3. 26. *You are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ:* the effect of saving faith is union with Christs person, the consequent of that Union is Adoption, or right to the inheritance.

The Minor is most plain in the Text: *To as many as received him, to them gave he power or right to become the sons of God:* a false faith hath no such priviledges annexed to it: no unbeliever is thus dignified: no stranger entitled to this inheritance.

Arg. 2.

Arg. 2. Secondly, That only is saving and justifying faith, which is in all true believers, in none but true believers; and in all true believers at all times.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been described, is in all true believers, in none but true believers; and in all true believers at all times.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, is the only saving and justifying faith.

The Major is undenyable, that must needs contain the essence of saving faith which is proper to every true believer, at all times, and to no other.

The Minor will be as clear, for there is no other act of faith, but this of *fiducial receiving Christ* as he is offer'd, that doth agree to all true believers, to none but true believers; and to all true believers at all times.

Actus fidei consistit in assu, quo quis assentitur alicui propositioni à deo revelatæ, propter authoritatem revelantis. Becan. Theol. Schol. Tom. 3. cap. 8. Q. 4.

There be three Acts of faith, *Assent*, *Acceptance*, and *Assurance*. The *Papists* generally give the essence of saving faith to the first, *viz. Assent*. The *Lutherans* and some of our own give it to the last, *viz. Assurance*: but it can neither be so, nor so. *Assent* doth not agree only to true believers or justified persons. *Assurance* agrees to justified persons, and them only, but not to all justified persons, and that at all times.

Assent is too low to contain the essence of saving faith, it is found in the unregenerate as well as the regenerate: yea, in devils as well as men. *Jam.* 2. 19. 'tis supposed and included in justi-

fying

fying faith, but it is not the justifying or saving act. *Assurance* is as much too high: being found only in some eminent believers; and in them too, but at some times: there's many a true believer to whom the joy and comfort of assurance is denyed: they may say of their Union with Christ, as *Paul* said of his vision; whether in the body, or out of the body I cannot tell: so they, whether in Christ, or out of Christ they cannot tell.

Many new-born Christians live like the new-born babe: *vivit & est vitæ nescius ipse suæ*: the whole stock of many a believer consists in the bare direct acts of faith.

A true believer may *walk in darkness, and see no light, Isa.* 50. 10. nay, a man must be a believer, before he know himself to be so: the *direct act* of faith is before the *reflex act*: so that the justifying act of faith lies neither in *Assent*, nor in *Assurance*. *Assent* saith, I believe that Christ is, and that he is the Saviour of the elect. *Assurance* saith, I believe and am sure that Christ dyed for me, and that I shall be saved through him. So that *Assent widens* the nature of faith too much, and *Assurance* upon the other hand *straitens* it too much: but *Acceptance*, which saith, I take Christ in all his offices to be mine, this fits it exactly, and belongs to all true believers, and to none but true believers; and to all true believers at all times: this therefore must be the justifying and saving act of faith.

Arg. 3.

Thirdly, That and no other is the justifying and saving act of faith, to which the properties and effects of saving faith do belong, or in which they are only found. *Arg.* 3.

But in the fiducial receiving of Christ, are the properties and effects of saving faith only found.

This therefore must be the justifying and saving act of faith.

First, By saving faith Christ is said to *dwell in our hearts, Eph.* 3. 17. but it is neither by *assent*, nor *assurance*, but by *acceptance*, and receiving him that he dwells in our hearts: not by assent, for then he would dwell in the unregenerate; nor by assurance, for he must dwell in our hearts before we can be assured of it; Therefore it is by acceptance.

Secondly, By faith we are justified, *Rom.* 5. 1. but neither assent nor assurance for the reasons above, do justifie;

fie; therefore it must be by the receiving act and no other.

Thirdly, The Scripture ascribes great difficulties to that faith by which we are saved: as being most cross and opposite to the corrupt nature of man; but of all the acts of faith none is clog'd with like difficulties, or conflicts with greater oppositions than the receiving act doth: about this act hang the greatest difficulties, fears, and deepest self-denyal. In assent a mans reason is convinced, and yields to the evidence of truth, so that he can do no other but assent to the truth. In assurance there is nothing against a mans will or comfort, but much for it; every one desires it: but it is not so in acceptance of Christ upon the self-denying terms of the Gospel, as will hereafter be evinced. We conclude therefore, that in this consists the nature and essence of saving faith.

3. Thirdly, Having seen what the receiving of Jesus Christ is, and that it is the faith by which we are justified and saved: I next come to open the *Dignity* and excellency of this faith, whose praises and *Encomiums* are in all the Scriptures: there you find it renowned by the title of *precious faith*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 7. *enriching faith*, *Jam.* 2. 5. *the work of God*, *Joh.* 6. 29. the *great mystery of Godliness*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. with many more rich *Epithets* throughout the Scriptures bestowed upon it.

Now faith may be considered two ways, *viz.* either

Qualitatively
or
Relatively.

Considered *qualitatively*, as a saving grace, it hath the same excellency that all other precious saving graces have: as it is the fruit of the Spirit it is more precious than Gold, *Prov.* 8. 11, 19. and so are all other graces as well as faith: in this sense they all shine with equal glory, and that a glory transcending all the glory of this world: but then consider faith *Relatively* as the instrument by which the righteousness of Christ is apprehended and made ours, and in that consideration it excels all other graces.

This

This is the grace that is ſingled out from among all other graces, to *receive Chriſt*, by which office it is dignified above all its fellows: as *Moſes* was honoured above the many thouſands of *Iſrael*, when God took him up into the *Mount*, admitted him nearer to himſelf than any other of all the Tribes might come; for they ſtood without the *Rail*, while *Moſes* was received into the ſpecial preſence of God, and was admitted to ſuch views as others muſt not have: ſo faith is honoured above all its fellow graces in being ſingled out, and ſolemnly anointed to this high *office* in our Juſtification: this is that precious eye that looks unto Chriſt as the ſtung *Iſraelites* did to the *brazen Serpent*, and derives healing vertue from him to the ſoul. It is the grace which inſtrumentally ſaves us, *Eph.* 2. 8. as it's Chriſts glory to be the *door* of ſalvation, ſo it's Faiths glory to be the golden *key* that opens that door.

What ſhall I ſay of Faith? 'tis the *bond* of Union, the *inſtrument* of juſtification, the *ſpring* of ſpiritual peace and joy, the *means* of ſpiritual livelihood and ſubſiſtence: and therefore the great *ſcope* and *drift* of the Goſpel, which aims at and preſſeth nothing more than to bring men and women to believe.

Firſt, This is the *bond of our Union* with Chriſt: that Union is begun in our vivification, and compleated in our actual receiving of Chriſt: the firſt is a bond of Union on the Spirits part, the ſecond, a bond of Union on our part. *Chriſt dwelleth in our hearts by faith*, *Eph.* 3. 17. and herein it is a door opened to let in many rich bleſſings to the ſoul: for by uniting us to Chriſt, it brings us into ſpecial favour and acceptation with God, *Eph.* 1. 6. makes us the ſpecial objects of Chriſts conjugal love and delight, *Eph.* 5. 29. draws from his heart ſympathy and tender ſenſe of all our miſeries and burdens, *Heb.* 4. 15.

Secondly, 'Tis the inſtrument of our juſtification, *Rom.* 5. 1. till Chriſt be received, (thus received by us) we are in our ſins, under guilt and condemnation; but when faith comes, then comes freedome: *by him all that believe are juſtified from all things*, *Acts* 13. 38. *Rom.* 8. 1. for it apprehends or receives the pure and perfect righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus, wherein the ſoul how guilty and ſinful ſoever it be in it ſelf,

Inveniri in Christo tacitam habet relationem ad dei judicium; in ils nullam invenit condemnationem, quia justitiâ, qualem esse requirit (i.e.) *perfectâ accumulatâ exornatos nos invenit; nempe justitia Christi per fidem nobis imputata.* Bern. in Loc.

ſtands faultleſs and ſpotleſs before the preſence of God: all obligations to puniſhment are upon believing immediately diſſolved: a full and final pardon ſealed. O precious faith, who can ſufficiently value it!

What reſpect, Reader, wouldſt thou have to that hand that ſhould bring thee a Pardon when on the Ladder or Block! why, that pardon, which thou canſt not read without tears of joy, is brought thee by the hand of faith. O ineſtimable grace! that cloaths the pure righteouſneſs of Jeſus upon our defiled ſouls: and ſo cauſes us to become the *righteouſneſs of God in him*, or as it is 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. *righteous as he is righteous: non formali & intrinſecâ Juſtitiâ, ſed relativâ*: not with a formal inherent righteouſneſs of our own, but with a relative imputed righteouſneſs from another.

I know this moſt excellent and moſt comfortable doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs is not only *denyed* but *derided* by *Papiſts*. *Stapleton* calls it *ſpectrum Cerebri Lutherani*: the monſtrous birth of *Luthers* brain: but bleſſed be God this comfortable truth is well ſecured againſt all attempts of its adverſaries. Let their blaſphemous mouths call it in deriſion as they do, *putative righteouſneſs*, (i.e.) a meer fancied or conceited righteouſneſs: yet we know aſſuredly Chriſts righteouſneſs is imputed to us, and that in the way of faith. If *Adams* ſin became ours by Imputation, then ſo doth *Chriſts* righteouſneſs alſo become ours by Imputation, *Rom.* 5. 17. If Chriſt were made a ſinner by the imputation of our ſins to him, who had no ſin of his own; then we are made righteous by the imputation of Chriſts righteouſneſs to us, who have no righteouſneſs of our own; according to 1 *Cor.* 5. 21. This was the way in which *Abraham* the father of them that believe was juſtified, and therefore this is the way in which all believers, the children of *Abraham*, muſt in like manner be juſtified. *Rom.* 4. 22, 23, 24. Who can expreſs the worth of faith in this one reſpect, if this were all it did for our ſouls?

But Thirdly, It is the *ſpring* of our ſpiritual peace and joy; and that as it is the Inſtrument of our *Juſtification*. If it be an inſtrument of our *Juſtification*, it cannot but be the ſpring of our *conſolation*. *Rom.* 5. 1. *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*: in uniting us with Chriſt, and apprehending and applying his righteouſneſs to us,

us, it becomes the ſeed or root of all the peace and joy of a Chriſtians life. Joy the child of faith therefore bears its name, *Phil.* 1. 25. *the joy of faith.* So 1 *Pet.* 1. 8, 9. *Believing we rejoyce with joy unſpeakable*: we cannot forbear laughing when we are tickled, nor can we forbear rejoycing while by faith we are brought to the ſight and knowledge of ſuch a priviledged ſtate: when faith hath firſt given, and then cleared our title to Chriſt, Joy is no more under the ſouls command: we cannot but rejoyce, and that with Joy unſpeakable.

Fourthly, It is the *means* of our ſpiritual livelihood and ſubſiſtance: all other graces like birds in the neſt depend upon what faith brings in to them: take away faith, and all the graces languiſh and dye: joy, peace, hope, patience, and all the reſt depend upon faith, as the members of the natural body do upon the veſſels by which blood and ſpirits are conveyed to them. *The life which I now live* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is by the faith of the Son of God*, *Gal.* 2. 20. it provides our *ordinary food*, and *extraordinary Cordials*, *Pſal.* 27. 13. *I had fainted unleſs I had believed.* And ſeeing it is all this to our ſouls,

Fifthly, In the laſt place it is no wonder that it is the main ſcope and drift of the Goſpel to preſs and bring ſouls to believing: 'tis the Goſpels grand deſign to bring up the hearts of men and women to faith. The urgent *commands* of the Goſpel aim at this, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *Mark* 1. 14, 15. *Joh.* 12. 36. hither alſo look the great *promiſes* and encouragements of the Goſpel, *Joh.* 6. 35 & 37. ſo *Mark* 16. 16. And the oppoſite ſin of unbelief is every where fearfully aggravated, and *threatned*, *Joh.* 16. 8, 9. *Joh.* 3. 18. 35. And this was the third thing premiſed, namely, a diſcovery of the tranſcendant worth and excellency of ſaving faith.

Fourthly, But leſt we commit a miſtake here, to the prejudice of Chriſts honour and glory, which muſt not be given to another, no not to faith it ſelf, I promiſed you in the fourth place to ſhew you upon what account faith is thus dignified and honoured: that ſo we may give unto *faith*, the things that are *faiths*; and to *Chriſt*, the things that are *Chriſts*. 4.

And I find four opinions about the interest of faith in our Justification: some will have it to justifie us *formally*, not relatively: (i. e.) upon the account of its own intrinsecal value and worth, and this is the *Popish* sense of Justification by faith. Some affirm that though faith be not our perfect legal righteousness considered as a work of ours, yet the *act* of believing is imputed to us for righteousness (*i. e.*) God graciously accepts it instead of perfect legal righteousness, and so in his esteem it's our evangelical righteousness. And this is the *Arminian* sense of justification by faith.

Some there are also even among our reformed Divines that contend that faith justifies and saves us as it is the *Condition* of the new Covenant. And Lastly, others will have it to justifie us as an *Instrument* apprehending or receiving the righteousness of Christ; with which opinion I must close: when I consider my Text calls it a *receiving of Christ*: most certain it is

That First, It doth not justifie in the *Popish sense*, upon the account of its own proper worth and dignity: for then

First, Justification should be of debt, not of grace; contrary to *Rom.* 3. 23, 24.

Secondly, This would frustrate the very scope and end of the death of Christ; for if righteousness come by the Law, (*i. e.*) by the way of works and desert, then is Christ dead in vain, *Gal.* 2. 21.

Thirdly, Then the way of our justification by faith would be so far from excluding, that it would establish boasting, expresly contrary to the *Apostle*, *Rom.* 3. 26, 27.

Fourthly, Then there should be no defects or imperfections in faith, for a defective and imperfect thing can never be the matter of our Justification before God: if it justifie upon the account of its own worth and proper dignity, it can have no flaw nor imperfection in it, contrary to the common sense of all believers. Nay,

Fifthly, Then it's the same thing to be justified by faith, and to be justified by works, which the *Apostle* so carefully distinguisheth and opposeth, *Phil.* 3. 9. and *Rom.* 4. 6. so that we conclude it doth not justifie in the Popish sense, for any worth or proper excellency that is in it self.

Secondly, And it is as evident it doth not justifie us in the *Arminian sense*, viz. as the *τὸ credere*, the Act of believing is imputed,

imputed, or accepted by God as our Evangelical righteouſneſs, inſteaᵈ of perfect legal righteouſneſs. In the former opinion you have the dreggs of Popery, and here you have refined Popery. Let all *Arminians* know we have as high eſteem for faith as any men in the world can have, but yet we will not rob Chriſt to cloath faith: we cannot embrace their opinion, becauſe

Firſt, We muſt then dethrone Chriſt, to exalt faith: we are willing to give it all that is due to it, but we dare not deſpoyl Chriſt of his glory for faiths ſake: he is *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, *Jer.* 23. we dare not ſet the ſervant above the maſter: we acknowledge no righteouſneſs but what the obedience and ſatisfaction of Chriſt yields us: his blood, not our faith, his ſatisfaction, not our believing it, is the matter of our juſtification before God.

Secondly, We dare not yield this point, leſt we undermine all the comfort of Chriſtians by bottoming their pardon and peace upon a weak, imperfect work of their own. Oh how tottering and unſtable muſt their ſtation be, that ſtand upon ſuch a bottom as this! what ups and downs are there in our faith, what mixtures of unbelief at all times, and prevalency of unbelief at ſome times; and is this a foundation to build our juſtification and hope upon? *debile fundamentum fallit opus*: if we lay the ſtreſs here, we build upon very looſe ground, and muſt be at a continual loſs both as to ſafety and comfort.

Thirdly, We dare not wrong the juſtice and truth of God at that rate, as to affirm that he eſteems and imputes our poor weak faith for perfect legal righteouſneſs: we know that the judgement of God is always according to truth: if the juſtice of God requires full payment, ſure it will not ſay it's fully ſatisfied by any act of ours; when all that we can do amounts not to one *mite* of the vaſt ſumm we owe to God. So that we deſervedly reject this opinion alſo.

Ergo quia fides Chriſtum juſtitiam noſtram recipit & gratiæ dei in Chriſto omnia tribuit, ideo fidei tribuitur juſtificatio, maxime propter Chriſtum, & non ideo quia noſtrum opus eſt. Confeſs. Helv.

Thirdly, And for the third *opinion* that it juſtifies as the *Condition of the new Covenant*, though ſome of great name and worth among our Proteſtant Divines ſeem to go that way, yet I cannot ſee according to this opinion any reaſon why *repentance* may not as properly be ſaid to juſtifie us as faith, for it is a condition of the new Covenant as much as faith, and

if

if faith justifie as a condition, then every other grace that is a condition must justifie as well as faith. I acknowledge faith to be a condition of the Covenant, but cannot allow that it justifies as a condition. And therefore must profess my self best satisfied in the last opinion, which speaks it an *instrument* in our justification: it is the hand which receives the righteousness of Christ that justifies us, and that gives it its value above all other graces: as when we say a *Diamond Ring* is worth one hundred pounds, we mean not the Gold that receives, but the stone that is set in it is worth so much: faith consider'd as an habit is no more precious than other gracious habits are, but consider'd as an *instrument* to receive Christ, and his righteousness; so it excels them all: and this instrumentality of faith is noted in these phrases ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει. *Rom.* 3. 28. and διὰ τῆς πίστεως, *Rom.* 3. 22. by faith and through faith. And thus much of the nature and excellency of saving faith.

The

The Seventh SERMON.

Serm. 7.

JOH. 1. 12. Text.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God; even to them that believe on his name.

THE Nature and Excellency of ſaving faith, together with its relation to juſtification as an Inſtrument in receiving Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, having been diſcourſed doctrinally already, I now come to make application of it according to the nature of this weighty and fruitful point.

And the Uſes I ſhall make of it will be for our

1. Information.
2. Examination.
3. Exhortation. And
4. Direction.

Firſt

First Use of Information.

1. *Use.* And in the first place this point yields us many and great and useful truths for our Information: as,

Infer. 1.

Infer. 1. Is the receiving of Christ the vital and saving act of faith which gives the soul right to the person and priviledges of Christ: Then it follows, *That the rejecting of Christ by unbelief must needs be the damning and soul-destroying sin, which cuts a man off from Christ and all the benefits purchased by his blood.* If there be *life in receiving*, there must needs be *death in rejecting* Christ.

There is no *grace* more *excellent* than faith, no *sin* more *execrable* and abominable than unbelief: faith is the saving grace, and unbelief is the damning sin. *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not shall be damned.* See *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. and *Joh.* 8. 24.

And the reason why this sin of unbelief is the damning sin is this, because in the justification of a sinner, there must be a cooperation of all the *Concauses* that have a joint influence into that blessed effect: As there must be free grace for an *impulsive* cause, The blood of Christ as the *meritorious* cause; so of necessity there must be faith the *Instrumental* cause to receive and apply what the free grace of God designed, and the blood of Christ purchased for us. For where there are many *social causes* or *concauses* to produce one effect, there the effect is not produced till the last cause be in Act.

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remissions of sins, *Acts* 10. 43. Faith in its place is as necessary as the blood of Christ in its place: *'tis Christ in you the hope of glory*, *Col.* 1. 27. not Christ in the *womb*, nor Christ in the *grave*, nor Christ in *heaven*, except he be also *Christ in you.*

Though Christ be come in the flesh, though he dyed and rose again from the dead; yet if you believe not, you must for all that, *dye in your sins*, *Joh.* 8. 24. and what a dreadful thing is this! better dye the death of a dog, better dye in a ditch,

ditch, than dye in your ſins: if you dye in your ſins, you will alſo riſe in your ſins; and ſtand at the bar of Chriſt in your ſins: you can never receive remiſſion till firſt you have received Chriſt. O curſed unbelief, which *damns* the ſoul: *diſhonours* God, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. *ſleights* Jeſus Chriſt the wiſdome of God, as if that glorious deſign of redemption by his blood, the triumph and maſter-piece of divine wiſdome, were meer fooliſhneſs, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. *fruſtrates* the great deſign of the Goſpel, *Gal.* 4. 11. and conſequently it muſt be the ſin of ſins: the worſt and moſt dangerous of all ſins: leaving a man under the guilt of all his other ſins.

Infer. 2.

If ſuch a receiving of Chriſt as hath been deſcribed, be ſaving and juſtifying faith? *Then faith is a work of greater difficulty than moſt men underſtand it to be, and there are but few ſound believers in the world.* *Infer.* 2.

Before Chriſt can be received the heart muſt be emptied and opened: but moſt mens hearts are full of ſelf righteouſneſs, and vain confidence: this was the caſe of the Jews, *Rom.* 10. 3. *being ignorant of Gods righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God.*

Mans righteouſneſs was once in himſelf, and what liquor is firſt put into the veſſel, it ever afterward ſavours of it: 'tis with *Adams* poſterity as with *Bees* which have been accuſtomed to go their own hive, and carry all thither; if the *hive* be removed to another place, they will ſtill flye to the old place, hover up and down about it, and rather dye there, than go to a new place. So it is with moſt men. God hath removed their righteouſneſs from *doing*, to *believing*: from *themſelves*, to *Chriſt*; but who ſhall prevail with them to forſake ſelf? nature will venture to be damned rather than do it: there is much *ſubmiſſion* in believing, and great ſelf denyal: a proud ſelf-conceited heart will never ſtoop to live upon the ſtock of anothers righteouſneſs.

Beſides, it is no eaſie thing to perſwade men to receive Chriſt as their Lord in all things, and ſubmit their necks to his ſtrict and holy precepts, though it be a great truth that

Jugum Christi non detrit, sed honestat colla. Bern.

Christs yoak doth not *gall*, but *grace* and adorn the neck that bears it; that the truest and sweetest liberty is in our freedom from our lusts, not in our fulfilling them: yet who shall perswade the carnal heart to believe this? and much less will men ever be prevailed withal to forsake father, mother, wife, children, inheritance, and life it self, to follow Christ: and all this upon the account of spiritual and invisible things: and yet this must be done by all that receive the Lord Jesus Christ upon Gospel terms: yea, and before the soul hath any encouraging experience of its own, to balance the manifold discouragements of sense and carnal reason, improved by the utmost craft of Satan to dismay it: for experience is the fruit and consequent of believing. So that it may well be placed among the great *mysteries* of godliness, that Christ is believed on in the world, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3. And then Thirdly, hence it will follow; *that there may be more true and sound believers in the world than know or dare conclude themselves to be such.* For as many ruine their own souls by placing the essence of saving faith in naked *assent*, so some rob themselves of their own comfort by placing it in full *assurance.* Faith and sense of faith are two distinct and separable mercies: you may have truly received Christ, and not receive the knowledge or assurance of it, *Isa.* 50. 10. Some there be that say *thou art our God*, of whom God never said *you are my people*: these have no *authority* to be call'd the sons of God: others there are of whom God saith, these are my people, yet dare not call God their God: these have authority to be call'd the sons of God, but know it not. They have received Christ, that's their *safety*; but they have not yet received the knowledge and assurance of it, that's their *trouble*: the Father owns his child in the Cradle, who yet knows him not to be his Father.

Now there are two reasons why many believers who might argue themselves into peace, do yet live without the comforts of their faith: and this may come to pass either from

First,

Firſt, The inevidence of the *premiſes.*

Secondly, Or the weighty importance of the *concluſion.*

Firſt, It may come to paſs from the inevidence of the premiſes. Aſſurance is a practical *Syllogiſm*, and it proceeds thus:

All that truly have received Chriſt Jeſus, they are the children of God.

I have truly received Jeſus Chriſt,

Therefore I am the child of God.

The Major propoſition is found in the Scripture, and there can be no doubt of that: the *Aſſumption* depends upon experience, or internal ſenſe. *I have truly received Jeſus Chriſt*: here uſually is the ſtumble, many great *objections* lye againſt it, which they cannot clearly anſwer: as,

Light and knowledge are neceſſarily required to the right receiving of Chriſt, but I am dark and ignorant, many carnal unregenerate perſons know more than I do, and are more able to diſcourſe of the myſteries of Religion than I am. 1. *Ob.*

But you ought to diſtinguiſh of the *kinds* and *degrees* of knowledge, and then you would ſee that your bewailed ignorance is no bar to your intereſt in Chriſt. There are two kinds of knowledge: *Sol.*

1. Natural.
2. Spiritual.

There is a *natural knowledge* even of ſpiritual objects, a ſpark of nature blown up by an advantagious education, and though the objects of this knowledge be ſpiritual things, yet the light in which they are diſcerned is but a meer natural light.

And there is a *ſpiritual knowledge* of ſpiritual things, the *teaching of the anointing*, as it's call'd 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. (*i. e.*) the effect and fruit of the Spirits ſanctifying work upon our ſouls, when the experience of a mans own heart informs and teacheth his underſtanding, when by feeling the workings of grace in our own ſouls, we come to underſtand its nature: this is ſpiritual knowledge. Now a little of this knowledge is a

better evidence of a mans interest in Christ, than the most raised and excellent degree of natural knowledge: as the *Philosopher* truly observes: *praestat pauculà de meliori scientia degustasse, quam de ignobiliori multa:* one drachm of knowledge of the best and most excellent things, is better than much knowledge of common things. So it is here, a little spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ, that hath life and savour in it, is more than all the natural sapless knowledge of the unregenerate, which leaves the heart dead, carnal and barren: 'tis not the *quantity* but the *kind*, not the *measure* but the *savour*: if you know so much of the evil of sin as renders it the most bitter and burdensome thing in the world to you, and so much of the necessity and excellency of Christ, as renders him the most sweet and desirable thing in the world to you; though you may be defective in many degrees of knowledge, yet this is enough to prove yours to be the fruit of the Spirit: you may have a sanctified heart, though you have an irregular or weak head: many that knew more than you are in *hell*, and some that once knew as little as you are now in *heaven: in absoluto & facili stat aeternitas*: God hath not prepar'd heaven only for clear and subtil heads: a little sanctified and effectual knowledge of Christs person, offices, suitableness, and necessity may bring thee thither, when others with all their curious speculations and notions may perish for ever.

2. *Ob.* But you tell me that *Assent* to the truths of the Gospel is necessarily included in saving faith, which though it be not the justifying and saving act, yet it is presupposed and required to it: now I have many staggerings and doubtings about the certainty and reality of these things: many horrid atheistical thoughts, which shake the assenting act of faith in the very foundation, and hence I doubt I do not believe.

Sol. There may be and often is a true and sincere *assent* found in the soul that is assaulted with violent atheistical suggestions from Satan; and thereupon questions the truth of it: and this is a very clear evidence of the reality of our assent, that whatever doubts or contrary suggestions there be, yet we dare not in our practice contradict or slight those truths or duties which we are tempted to disbelieve. *Ex. gr.*

we

we are assaulted with atheistical thoughts, and tempted to slight and cast off all fears of sin, and practice of religious duties, yet when it comes to the point of practice, we dare not commit a known sin, the awe of God is upon us: we dare not omit a known duty, the tye of conscience is found strong enough to hold us close to it: in this case, 'tis plain, we do really assent, when we think we do not. A man thinks he doth not love his child, yet carefully provides for him in health, and is full of grief and fears about him in sickness: why now, so long as I see all fathrly duties performed, and affections to his childs welfare manifested; let him say what he will as to the want of love to him, whilest I see this, he must excuse me if I do not believe him, when he saith he hath no love for him: Just so is it in this case, A man saith I do not assent to the being, necessity, or excellency of Jesus Christ: yet in the mean time his soul is fill'd with cares and fears about securing his interest in him, he is found panting and thirsting for him with vehement desires, there's nothing in all the world would give him such joy, as to be well assured of an interest in him; while it is thus with any man, let him say or think what he will of his assent, it's manifest by this he doth truly and heartily assent, and there can be no better proof of it than these real effects produc'd by it.

Secondly, But if these, and other objections were never so fully answer'd for the clearing of the *assumption*, yet it often falls out, that believers are afraid to draw the conclusion, and that fear arises partly from

First, The weighty importance of the matter.

Secondly, The sense of the deceitfulness of their own hearts.

First, The conclusion is of infinite importance to them, it is the everlasting happiness of their souls, than which nothing is or can be of greater weight upon their spirits: things in which we are most deeply concerned are not lightly and hastily received by us: it seems so great and so good, that we are still apt (if there be any room for it) to suspect the truth and certainty thereof, as never being sure enough.

Thus

Thus when the women that were the first messengers and witnesses of Christs resurrection, *Luke* 24. 10, 11. came and told the disciples those wonderful and comfortable tydings, it's said, *that their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not:* they thought it was too good to be true: too great to be hastily received: so is it in this case.

Secondly, The sense they have of the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and the dayly workings of hypocrisie there, makes them afraid to conclude in so great a point as this is.

They know that very many dayly cozen and cheat themselves in this matter, they know also that their own hearts are full of falseness and deceit, they find them so in their daily observations of them, and what if they should prove so in this? why then they are lost for ever! they also know there is not the like danger in their fears and jealousies, that would be in their vain confidences and presumptions: by the one they are only deprived of their present *comfort*, but by the other they would be ruined for ever: and therefore choose rather to dwell with their own fears, (though they be uncomfortable companions) than run the danger of so great a mistake, which would be infinitely more fatal. And this being the common case of most Christians, it follows that there must be many more believers in the world than do think or dare conclude themselves to be such.

Infer. 4.

Infer. 4. If the right receiving of Jesus Christ be true saving and justifying faith, *then those that have the least and lowest degree and measure of saving faith, have cause for ever to admire the bounty and riches of the grace of God to them therein.*

If you have received never so little of his bounty by the hand of providence in the good things of this life, yet if he have given you any measure of true saving faith, he hath dealt bountifully indeed with you: this mercy alone is enough to ballance all other wants and inconveniencies of this life. *Poor in the world, rich in faith, James* 2. 5. O let your hearts take

take in the full ſenſe of this bounty of God to you, ſay with the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 1. 3. *bleſſed be the God and father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus*: and you will in this one mercy find matter enough of praiſe and thankſgiving, wonder and admiration to your dying day, yea, to all eternity: for do but conſider

Firſt, The ſmalleſt meaſure of ſaving faith which is found in any of the poople of God, receives Jeſus Chriſt; and in receiving him what mercy is there which the believing ſoul doth not receive in him and with him? *Rom.* 8. 32.

O believer, though the arms of thy faith be ſmall and weak; yet they embrace a great Chriſt, and receive the richeſt gift that ever God beſtowed upon the world: no ſooner art thou become a believer, but Chriſt is in thee the hope of glory: and thou haſt authority to become a ſon or daughter of God: thou haſt the broad ſeal of heaven to confirm thy title and claim to the priviledges of Adoption, for *to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God. To as many*] be they ſtrong, or be they weak; provided they really receive Chriſt by faith; there is authority or power given, ſo that it's no act of preſumption in them to ſay God is our Father, heaven is our inheritance. Oh precious faith! the treaſures of ten thouſand worlds cannot purchaſe ſuch priviledges as theſe: all the Crowns and Scepters of the earth ſold at their full value, are no price for ſuch mercies.

Secondly, The leaſt degree of ſaving faith brings the ſoul into a ſtate of perfect and full Juſtification. For if it receives Jeſus Chriſt, it muſt therefore needs in him, and with him receive a free, full, and final pardon of ſin: the leaſt meaſure of faith receives remiſſion for the greateſt ſins. *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things*, *Acts* 13. 39. it unites thy ſoul with Chriſt, and then as the neceſſary conſequent of that Union, there is no condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. οὐδὲν κατάκριμα not one condemnation, how many ſoever our ſins have been.

Thirdly, The leaſt meaſure or degree of ſaving faith is a greater mercy than God hath beſtowed, or ever will beſtow upon

upon many that are far above you in outward respects: *all men have not faith:* nay 'tis but a remnant among men that believe. Few of the *Nobles* and *Potentates* of the world have such a gift as this: they have houses and lands, yea, Crowns and Scepters, but no Faith, no Christ, no pardon: they have authority to rule over men, but no authority to become the sons of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26, 27.

Say therefore in thy most debased, straitned, afflicted condition, *Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

Fourthly, The least degree of saving faith is more than all the power of nature can produce: there must be a special revelation of the arm of the Lord in that work, *Isa.* 53. 1. Believers are not *born of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God, Joh.* 1. 12, 13. all believing motions towards Christ are the effects of the Fathers drawing, *Joh.* 6. 44. a glorious and irresistable power goes forth from God to produce it, whence it's call'd *the faith of the operation of God, Col.* 2. 12.

So then, Let not believers despise the day of small things: or overlook that great and infinite mercy which is wrapt up in the least degree of saving faith.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. *Learn hence the impossibility of their salvation who neither know the nature, nor enjoy the means of saving faith.*

My soul pities and mourns over the infidel world. Ah what will become of the millions of poor unbelievers! there is but one door of salvation, *viz.* Christ; and but one Key of faith to open that door: and as that key was never given to the heathen world, so it's laid aside, or taken away from the people by their cruel guides, all over the Popish world: were you among them you should hear nothing else prest as necessary to your salvation but a blind implicite faith, to believe as the Church believes, that is, to believe they know not what.

**Non enim fides interior Romani Pontificis ecclesiæ est necessaria.* Canus Loc. Theol. p. 344.

To believe as the *Pope* believes, that is, as an Infidel believes, for so they confess he may be, *and though there be such a thing as an explicite faith sometimes spoken of among

among them, yet it is very ſparingly diſcourſed, very falſely deſcribed, and exceedingly ſlighted by them, as the veriеſt triſle in the world.

Firſt, It is but ſparingly diſcourſed of: they love not to accuſtome the peoples ears to ſuch doctrine: one of themſelves confeſſes that there is ſo deep a ſilence of explicit particular faith in the *Romiſh Church* that you may find many every where that believe no more of theſe things than heathen *Philoſophers*. Navarr, cap. 11. p. 142.

Secondly, When it is preacht or written of, it is falſely deſcribed: for they place the whole nature and eſſence of juſtifying and ſaving faith in a naked *aſſent*: which the Devils have as well as men, *James* 2. 19. no more than this is preſt upon the people at any time, as neceſſary to their ſalvation.

Thirdly, And even this particular explicit faith when it is ſpoken or written of is exceedingly ſlighted. I think if the *Devil* himſelf were in the *Pulpit*, he could hardly tell how to bring men to a more low and ſlight eſteem of faith; to repreſent it as a verier triſle, and needleſs thing than theſe his Agents have done. Some (*a*) ſay, if a man believe with a particular explicit faith (*i.e.*) if he actually aſſent to Scripture truths once in a year, it is enough. Yea, and others (*b*) think it too much to oblige people to believe once in twelve months, and for their eaſe tell them if they believe once in twelve years it is ſufficient: and leſt this ſhould be too great a task (*c*) others affirm that if it be done but once in their whole life, and that at the point of death too, it is enough, eſpecially for the rude and common people. Good God! what doctrine is here! it was a ſaying long ago of *Gregory* (as I remember) *malus miniſter eſt niſus diaboli*: a wicked miniſter is the devils *Goſhawk*, that goes a birding for hell: and O what game have theſe hawks of hell among ſuch numerous flocks of people! O bleſs God while you live for your deliverance from Popery: and ſee that you prize the Goſpel and means of grace you enjoy at an higher rate, leſt God bring you once more under that yoak, which neither you nor your Fathers could bear.

a Petr. à S. Joſeph. ſum. Art. 1. p. 6.
b Bonacina Tom. 2. in 1. præcept.
c Jo. Sanc. Diſp. 41. n. 32.

Second Use for Examination.

2. *Use.* Doth saving faith consist in a due and right receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ, then let me perswade you to examine your selves in this great point of faith. Reflect solemnly upon the transactions that have been betwixt Christ and your souls: think close on this subject of meditation.

If all you were worth in the world lay in one precious stone, and that stone were to be tried by the skilful *Lapidary*, whether it were true or false, whether it would flye or endure under the smart stroke of his Hammer, sure your thoughts could not be unconcerned about the issue: why, all that you are worth in both worlds depends upon the truth of your faith, which is now to be tried.

O therefore read not these lines with a running careless eye, but seriously ponder the matter before you: you would be loth to put to Sea, though it were but to cross the *channel*, in a rotten leaky bottome: and will you dare to venture into the ocean of eternity in a false rotten faith? God forbid: you know the Lord is coming to try every mans faith as by fire, and that we must stand or fall for ever with the sincerity or hypocrisie of our faith. Surely you can never be too exact and careful about that on which your whole estate depends, and that for ever.

Now there are three things upon which we should have a very tender and watchful eye for the discovery of the sincerity of our faith, and they are

The { Antecedents / Concomitants / Consequents } of Faith.

As these are, so we must judge and reckon our faith to be. And accordingly they furnish us with three general Marks or tryals of faith.

1. *Mark.* First, If you would discern the sincerity of your faith examine whether those *Antecedents* and preparative works of the Spirit were ever found in your souls, which use to introduce and usher it into the souls of Gods Elect: such are illumination,

mination, conviction, self-despair, and earnest crys to God.

First, *Illumination* is a necessary antecedent to faith: you cannot believe till God hath opened your eyes to see your sin, your misery by sin, and your remedy in Jesus Christ alone: you find this act of the Spirit to be the first in order both of nature and time, and introductive to all the rest, *Acts* 26. 18. *To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.* As faith without *works* (which must be a *consequent* to it) is *dead*, so faith without *light*, which must be an *Antecedent* to it, is *blind*: faith is the *hand* by which Christ is received, but knowledge is the *eye* by which that hand is directed.

Well then, hath God opened your eyes to see sin and misery in another manner than ever you saw it before? for certainly if God have opened your eyes by saving illumination, you will find as great a difference betwixt your former and present apprehensions of sin and danger, as betwixt a painted *Lion* upon the wall or sign post, and the real living *Lion* that meets you roaring in the way.

Secondly, *Conviction* is an *Antecedent* to believing: where this goes not before, no faith can follow after: the Spirit first convinces of sin, then of righteousness, *Joh.* 16. 8. So *Mark* 1. 15. *repent ye, and believe the Gospel:* believe it O man, that breast of thine must be wounded, that vain and frothy heart of thine must be pierced and stung with conviction, sense, and sorrow for sin: thou must have some sick days and restless nights for sin, if ever thou rightly close with Christ by faith: 'tis true, there is much difference found in the strength, depth, and continuance of conviction and spiritual troubles in converts, as there is in the labours and travailing pains of women, but sure it is, the child of faith is not ordinarily born without some pangs. Conviction is the application of that light which God makes to shine in our minds, to our particular case and condition, by the conscience: and sure when men come to see their miserable and sad estate by a true light, it cannot but wound them, and that to the very heart.

Thirdly, *Self-despair*, or a total and absolute loss in our selves about deliverance, and the way of escape, either by

our ſelves, or any other meer creature, doth and muſt go before faith.

So it was with thoſe believers, *Acts* 2. 37. *men and brethren what ſhall we do?* they are the words of men at a total loſs: it is the voyce of poor diſtreſſed ſouls that ſaw themſelves in miſery, but knew not, ſaw not, nor could deviſe any way of eſcape from it, by any thing they could do for themſelves, or any other creature for them: and hence the Apoſtle uſes that emphatical word, *Gal.* 3. 23. συγκεκλεισμένοι (*i. e.*) *ſhut up to the faith*, (i. e.) as men beſieged and diſtreſſed in a garriſon in time of a ſtorm, when the enemy pours in upon them through the breaches, and over-powers them: there is but one *ſally-port* or gate at which they can eſcape, and to that they all throng; as deſpairing of life if they take any other courſe: Juſt ſo do mens convictions beſiege them, diſtreſs them, beat them off from all their holds and intrenchments; and bring them to a pinching diſtreſs in themſelves, ſhutting them up to *Chriſt* as the only way of eſcape. Duties cannot ſave me, reformation cannot ſave me, nor Angels nor men can ſave me; there is no way but one, *Chriſt* or Condemnation for evermore.

I thought once that a little repentance, reformation, reſtitution, and a ſtricter life, might be a way to eſcape wrath to come; but I find the bed is too ſhort, and the covering too narrow: all is but loſs, dung, droſs, in compariſon with Jeſus Chriſt: if I truſt to thoſe *Ægyptian reeds*, they will not only fail me, but pierce and wound me too. I ſee no hope within the whole *Horizon* of ſenſe.

Fourthly, Hence come *vehement and earneſt crys to God* for faith, for Chriſt, for help from heaven to tranſport the ſoul out of this dangerous condition, to that ſtrong rock of ſalvation: to bring it out of this furious ſtormy Sea of trouble where it's ready to wreck every moment, into that ſafe and quiet harbour Chriſt.

O when a man ſhall ſee his miſery and danger, and no way of eſcape but Chriſt, and that he hath no ability in himſelf to come to Chriſt, to open his heart thus to receive him, but that this work of faith is wholly ſupernatural, the operation of God; How will the ſoul return again and again upon God with ſuch crys as that *Mark* 9. 24. *Lord help my unbelief.*

"Lord

"Lord enable me to come to Chriſt: give me Chriſt or I "periſh for ever: what profit is there in my blood? why "ſhould I dye in the ſight and preſence of a Saviour? O "Lord it is thine own work and a moſt glorious work: "reveal thine arm in this work upon my ſoul, I pray thee: "give me Chriſt, if thou deny me bread: give me faith, if thou "deny me breath: it's more neceſſary that I believe, than "that I live.

O Reader, reflect upon the days and nights that are paſt, the places where thou haſt been converſant: where are the bed-ſides, or the ſecret corners where thou haſt beſieged heaven with ſuch crys? if God have thus inlightned, convinced, diſtreſſed thy ſoul, and thus ſet thee a mourning after Chriſt, it will be one good ſign that faith is come into thy ſoul; for here are certainly the *Harbingers* and fore runners of it, that ordinarily make way for faith into the ſouls of men.

Secondly, If you would be ſatisfied of the ſincerity and truth of your faith, then examine what *Concomitants* it is attended with in your ſouls. I mean what frames and tempers your ſouls were in at that time when you think you received Chriſt. For certainly in thoſe that receive Chriſt (excepting thoſe into whoſe hearts God hath in a more ſtill and inſenſible way infuſed faith betime, by his bleſſing upon pious education) ſuch concomitant frames of Spirit may be remarkt, as theſe following. 2. *Mark.*

Firſt, The heart is deeply *ſerious*, and as much in earneſt in this matter, as ever it was, or can be about any thing in the world. This you ſee in that example of the *Jaylor*, *Acts* 16. 29. *he came in trembling and aſtoniſhed*: it is the moſt ſolemn and important matter that ever the ſoul had before it in this world, or ever ſhall, or can have: how much are the hearts of men affected in their outward ſtraits and diſtreſſes about the concernments of the body? their hearts are not a little concern'd in ſuch queſtions as theſe, *What ſhall I eat? what ſhall I drink?* wherewithal ſhall I and mine be fed and cloathed? but certainly the ſtraits that ſouls are in about ſalvation, muſt be allowed to be greater than theſe; and ſuch queſtions as that of the *Jaylors*; *Sirs! what muſt I do to be ſaved?* make deeper impreſſions upon the heart,

heart, than what ſhall I eat, or drink? Some indeed have their thoughts ſinking deeper into theſe things than others: theſe thoughts lye with different degrees of weight upon men: but all are moſt ſolemnly and awfully concerned about their condition: all frothineſs and frolicks are gone, and the heart ſettles it ſelf in deepeſt earneſt about its eternal ſtate.

Secondly, The heart that receives Jeſus Chriſt is in a frame of deep *humiliation* and ſelf-abaſement. O when a man begins to apprehend the firſt approaches of grace, pardon and mercy by Jeſus Chriſt to his ſoul: a ſoul convinced of its utter unworthineſs, and deſert of hell; and can ſcarce expect any thing elſe from the juſt and holy God but damnation; how do the firſt dawnings of mercy melt and humble it! "O Lord what am I that thou ſhouldeſt feed me and "preſerve me! that thou ſhouldeſt but for a few years ſpare "me, and forbear me! but that ever Jeſus Chriſt ſhould love "me and give himſelf for me, that ſuch a wretched ſinner "as I ſhould obtain Union with his perſon, pardon, peace "and ſalvation by his blood! Lord whence is this to ſuch a "worm as I? and will Chriſt indeed beſtow himſelf upon "me? ſhall ſo great a bleſſing as Chriſt ever come within "the arms of ſuch a ſoul as mine? will God in very deed "be reconciled to me in his ſon? what to me! to ſuch an "enemy as I have been! ſhall my ſins which are ſo many, ſo "horrid, ſo much aggravated beyond the ſins of moſt men, be "forgiven me? O what am I vile duſt, baſe wretch, that "ever God ſhould do this for me! And now is that Scripture indeed fulfill'd and made good, *Ezech.* 16. 63. *That thou maiſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou haſt done, ſaith the Lord God.* Thus that poor broken-hearted believer ſtood behind Chriſt weeping, and waſhing his feet with tears; as one quite melted down and overcome with the ſenſe of mercy to ſuch a vile ſinner, *Luke* 7. 38.

Thirdly, The ſoul that receives Jeſus Chriſt is in a *weary Condition*, reſtleſs and full of diſquietneſs, neither able to bear the burden of ſin, nor knowing how to be diſcharged from it; except Chriſt will give it eaſe, *Matth.* 11. 28. *Come unto me,* that

that is believe in me, *you that are weary and heavy laden*: if they do not look into their own ſouls they know there's no *ſafety*, and if they do, there's no *comfort*. O the burdenſome ſenſe of ſin overweighs them: they are ready to fail, to ſink under it.

Fourthly, The ſoul that rightly receives Chriſt is not only in a weary, but in a *longing condition*: never did the *hart* pant more earneſtly for the water-brooks: never did the *hireling* deſire the ſhadow, never did a *condemned perſon* long for a pardon, more than the ſoul longs after Jeſus Chriſt. O ſaid *David*, that one would give me of the waters of the well of *Bethlehem* to drink. O ſaith the poor humbled ſinner, that one would give me of the open'd fountain of the blood of Chriſt to drink! O for one drop of that precious blood! O for one encouraging ſmile from Chriſt! O now were ten thouſand worlds at my command, and Chriſt to be bought; how freely would I lay them all down to purchaſe him! but he is the *gift* of God. O that God would give me Chriſt if I ſhould go in raggs, and hunger and thirſt all my days in this world!

Fifthly, The ſoul in the time of its cloſing with or receiving Chriſt is in a *ſtate of conflict*: it hangs betwixt hopes and fears, encouragements and diſcouragements, which occaſion many a ſad ſtand and pauſe in the way to Chriſt; ſometimes the number and nature of its ſins diſcourage it, then the riches and freeneſs of the grace of Chriſt erects his hopes again: there's little hope, ſaith unbelief, nay it's utterly impoſſible ſaith *Satan*, that ever ſuch a wretch as thou ſhouldſt find mercy; now the hands hang down. O but then there's a neceſſity, an abſolute neceſſity; I have not the choice of two, but am ſhut up to one way of deliverance: others have found mercy, and the invitation is to all that are weary, and to all that are athirſt: he ſaith he that cometh to him, he will in no wiſe caſt out; now new hopes inſpire the ſoul, and the hands that did hang down are again ſtrengthned.

Theſe are the *Concomitant frames* that accompany faith.

Laſtly, Examine the *Conſequents* and effects of Faith if you would be ſatisfied of the truth and ſincerity of it: and ſuch are 3. *Mark.*

Firſt,

First, *Evangelical meltings*, and ingenuous thawings of the heart under the apprehensions of grace and mercy: *Zech.* 12. 10. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn.*

Secondly, *Love to Christ, his ways and people. Gal.* 5. 6. *Faith worketh by love*, (i. e.) it represents the love of God, and then makes use of the sweetness of it by way of argument to constrain the soul to all acts of obedience, wherein it may testifie the reality of its love to God and Christ.

Thirdly, Heart *purity*, *Acts* 15. 9. *purifying their hearts by faith*: it doth not only cleanse the *hands* but the *heart:* no principle in man besides faith can do this: morality may *hide* corruption, but faith only *purifies* the heart from it.

Fourthly, *Obedience* to the commands of Christ, *Rom.* 16. 26. the very name of faith is call'd upon obedience: for it accepts Christ as Lord, and urges upon the soul the most powerful arguments in the world to draw it to obedience.

In a word, let the poor doubting believer that questions his faith, reflect upon those things that are unquestionable in his own experience, which being well considered will greatly tend to his satisfaction in this point.

It's very doubtful to you whether you believe, but yet in the mean while, it may be past doubt, (being a matter of clear experience) that you have been deeply convinced of sin, struck off from all carnal props and refuges, made willing to accept Jesus Christ upon what terms soever you might enjoy him: you doubt whether Christ be yours, but it's past doubt that you have a most high and precious esteem of Christ, that you heartily long for him, that you prize and love all, whether persons or things, that bears his image: that nothing in the world would please your hearts like a transformation into his likeness, that you had rather your souls should be fill'd with his Spirit, than your houses with Gold and Silver. 'Tis doubtful whether Christ be yours, but it's past doubt that one smile from Christ, one token of his love, would do you more good than all the honours and smiles of the world; and nothing so grieves you, as your grieving

grieving him by ſin doth: you dare not ſay that you have received him, nor can you deny but that you have had many ſick days and nights for him: that you have gone into many ſecret places with yearning bowels after him: whether he be yours or not, you cannot tell; but that you are reſolved to be his, that you can tell: whether he will ſave you is a doubt, but that you reſolve to lye at his feet, and wait only on him, and never look to another for ſalvation, is no doubt.

Well, well; poor penſive ſoul, if it be ſo, ariſe, lift up thy dejected head, take thine own Chriſt into thy arms. Theſe are undoubted ſigns of a real cloſure with Chriſt: thou makeſt thy ſelf poor, and yet haſt great riches: ſuch things as theſe are not found in them that deſpiſe and reject Chriſt by unbelief.

3. *Uſe of Exhortation.*

3. *Uſe.*

This point is likewiſe very improveable by way of Exhortation, and that both to

Unbelievers
and
Believers.

Firſt, To unbelievers who from hence muſt be preſt, as ever they expect to ſee the face of God in peace, to receive Jeſus Chriſt as he is now offered to them in the Goſpel: this is the very ſcope of the Goſpel, I ſhall therefore preſs it by three great Conſiderations: *viz.*

Firſt, What is in Chriſt whom you are to receive.
Secondly, What is in the offer of Chriſt by the Goſpel.
Thirdly, What is in the rejecting of that offer.

Firſt Motive.

Firſt, Conſider well what is in Chriſt whom I perſwade you this day to receive: did you know what is in Chriſt, you would never neglect or reject him as you do: For *Motive* 1.

First, God is in Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. the Deity hath chosen to dwell in his flesh, he is God manifest in flesh, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. a Godhead dwelling in flesh is the worlds wonder: so that in receiving Christ, you receive God himself.

Secondly, The *Authority* of God is in Christ, *Exodus* 23. 21. *My name is in him: him hath God the father sealed*, *Joh.* 6. 27. he hath the Commission, the great seal of heaven to redeem and save you: all power in heaven and earth is given to him, *Matth.* 28. 18. he comes in his Fathers name to you, as well as in his own name.

Thirdly, The wisdome of God is in Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. *Christ the wisdom of God:* yea, *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdome and knowledge*, *Col.* 2. 3. Never did the wisdome of God display it self before the eyes of Angels and men as it hath done in Christ. The *Angels desire to look into it*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. yet they are not so much concerned in the project and design of this wisdome in redemption as you are.

Fourthly, The *fulness of the Spirit* is in Christ: yea, it fills him so as it never did nor will fill any creature, *Joh.* 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*: all others have their limits, stints, and measures; some more, some less; but the Spirit is in Christ without measure. O how lovely and desirable are those men that have a large measure of the Spirit in them! but he is anointed with the Spirit of holiness *above all his fellows*, *Psal.* 45. 2, 7. Whatever grace is found in all the Saints which makes them desirable and lovely, wisdome in one, faith in another, patience in a third; they all Centre in Christ as the rivers do in the Sea: *quæ faciunt divisa beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt.*

Fifthly, The *righteousness of God* is in Christ, by which only a poor guilty sinner can be justified before God. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. we are made the righteousness of God in him: he is יְהוָה צִדְקֵנוּ the Lord our righteousness, *Jer.* 23. 6. (*i.e.*) the author of our righteousness, or the Lord who justifies us: by that name he shall be known and call'd by his people, than which none can be sweeter.

(i.e.) *Autorem justitiæ nostræ.* Calv. in Loc.

Sixthly, *The love of God* is in Christ: yea, the very yearning bowels of divine love are in him: what is Christ but the love of God wrapt up in flesh and blood? 1 *Joh.* 4. 9, 10. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us*, and herein is love that

that God sent his Son: this is the highest flight that ever divine love made, and higher than this it cannot mount. O love, unparaleld and admirable!

Seventhly, *The mercies and compassions* of Christ are all in Christ, *Jude v.* 21. Mercy is the thing that poor sinners want, it's that they cry for at the last gasp, it's the only thing that can do them good. O what would they give to find mercy in that great day? Why, if you receive Christ, you shall with him receive mercy: but out of him there is no mercy to be expected from the hands of God: for God will never exercise mercy to the prejudice of his Justice, and it is in Christ that justice and mercy meet and embrace each other.

Eighthly, To Conclude, *The salvations of God* are in Christ. *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other.* Christ is the *door* of salvation, and Faith is the *key* that opens that door to men: if you therefore believe not, (*i.e.*) if you so receive not Jesus Christ as God hath offer'd him, you exclude your selves from all hopes of salvation. The Devils have as much ground to expect salvation as you: you see what is in Christ to induce you to receive him.

Motive 2.

Next, I beseech you consider what there is in the *offer* of Christ to sinners, to induce you to receive him. Consider well to *whom*, and *how* Christ is offered in the Gospel. *Motive* 2.

First, *To whom* he is offered: not to the fallen *Angels* but to you: they lye in chains of darkness, *Jude* 6. as he took not their nature, so he designs not their recovery; and therefore will have no treaty at all with them: but he is offered to you, creatures of an inferiour rank and order by nature: nor is he offered to the *damned*, the treaty of peace is ended with them. Christ will never make them another tender of salvation: nor is he offered to millions of millions as good as you now living in the word: the sound of *Christ* and *Salvation* is not come to their ears; but he is offered to you by the special favour and bounty of heaven: and will you not receive him? O then how will the devils, the damned,

ned: and the heathens upbraid your folly! and say, had we had one such tender of mercy of which you have had thousands, we would never have been now in this place of torments.

Secondly, Consider *how* Christ is offered to you, and you shall find that he is offered,

First, Freely, as *the gift of God* to your souls: you are not to *purchase* him, but only to *receive* him, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money let him come,* &c.

Secondly, Christ is offered importunately by repeated intreaties, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *As though God did beseech you, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God.* O what amazing condescension is here in the God of mercy! God now beseeches you, will you not yield to the intreaties of your God? O then what wilt thou say for thy self when God will not hear thee, when thou shalt intreat and cry for mercy? Which brings us to the

Motive 3.

Motive 3. Consider the sin and danger that there is in refusing or neglecting the present offers of Christ in the Gospel, and surely there is much sin in it: the very malignity of sin, and the summ of all misery lyes here: for in refusing Christ,

First, you put the greatest contempt and slight upon all the Attributes of God that it is possible for a creature to do: God hath made his justice, his mercy, his wisdome, and all his attributes to shine in their brightest glory in Christ: never was there such a display of the glory of God made to the world in any other way.

O then, what is it to reject and despise Jesus Christ, but to offer the greatest affront to the glory of God that it is possible for men to put upon him?

Secondly, you hereby frustrate and evacuate the very design and importance of the Gospel to your selves, you *receive the grace of God in vain*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. as good, yea, better had it been for you, that Christ had never come into the world, or if he had, that your lot had fallen in the dark places of the

the earth where you had never heard his name: yea, good had it been for that man if he had never been born.

Thirdly, hereby a man murthers his own ſoul. *I ſaid therefore unto you that you ſhall dye in your ſins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall dye in your ſins, Joh.* 8. 24. unbelief is ſelf-murther: you are guilty of the blood of your own ſouls: life and ſalvation was offered you, and you rejected it: yea,

Fourthly, The refuſing of Chriſt by unbelief will aggravate your damnation, above all others that periſh in ignorance of Chriſt. O 'twill be more tolerable for heathens than for you: the greateſt meaſures of wrath are reſerved to puniſh the worſt of ſinners, and among ſinners none will be found worſe than unbelievers.

Secondly, To Believers, this point is very uſeful to perſwade them to divers excellent duties: among which I ſhall ſingle out two principal ones. 2.

Viz.
1. To bring up their faith of acceptance to the faith of aſſurance.
2. To bring up their converſations to the principles and rules of faith.

Firſt, You that have received Jeſus Chriſt truly, give your ſelves no reſt till you are fully ſatisfied that you have done ſo: acceptance brings you to heaven hereafter, but aſſurance will bring heaven into your ſouls now. O what a life of delight and pleaſure doth the aſſured believer live! what pleaſure is it to him to look back and conſider where once he was, and where now he is: to look forward and conſider where he now is! and where ſhortly he ſhall be! I was in my ſins, I am now in Chriſt, I am in Chriſt now, I ſhall be with Chriſt and that for ever, after a few days. I was upon the very brink of hell, I am now upon the very borders of heaven; I ſhall be in a little while among the innumerable company of Angels and glorified Saints bearing part with them in the Song of *Moſes* and of the Lamb for evermore.

And why may not you that have received Chriſt, receive the comfort of your union with him? there be all the grounds and helps

Viget apud nos ſpei immobilis virtus & firmitas. Cypr. Sermone de patientia.

helps to aſſurance furniſht to your hand: there is a real union betwixt Chriſt and your ſouls, which is the very groundwork of aſſurance: you have the Scriptures before you which contain the ſigns of faith, and the very things within you that anſwer thoſe ſigns in the word. So you read, and ſo, juſt ſo you might feel it in your own hearts, would you attend to your own experience. The ſpirit of God is ready to ſeal you, 'tis his office and his delight ſo to do: O therefore give diligence to this work, attend the ſtudy of the Scriptures, and of your own hearts more, and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, and you may arrive to the very deſire of your hearts.

Secondly, Bring up your converſations to the excellent principles and rules of faith. *As you have received Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, ſo walk in him, Col.* 2. 6. live as you believe: you received Chriſt ſincerely in your firſt cloſe with him, O maintain the like ſeriouſneſs and ſincerity in all your ways to the end of your lives: you received him intirely and *undividedly* at firſt, let there be no exceptions againſt any of his commands afterward: you received him *excluſively* to all others; ſee that you watch againſt all ſelf-righteouſneſs and ſelf-conceitedneſs now, and mingle nothing of your own with his blood, whatever gifts or enlargements in duty God ſhall give you afterwards.

You received him *adviſedly* at firſt, weighing and conſidering the ſelf-denying terms upon which he was offered to you, O ſhew that it was real, and that you ſee no cauſe to repent the bargain, whatever you ſhall meet with in the ways of Chriſt and duty afterwards. Convince the world of your conſtancy and chearfulneſs in all your ſufferings for Chriſt, that you are ſtill of the ſame mind you were, and that Chriſt with his croſs, Chriſt with a priſon, Chriſt with the greateſt afflictions is worthy of all acceptation: *as you have received him, ſo walk ye in him:* let him be as ſweet, as lovely, as precious to you now, as he was the firſt moment you received him: yea, let your love to him, delights in him, and ſelf-denyal for him, increaſe with your acquaintance with him day by day.

4. *Uſe*

4. Use of Direction. 4. Use.

Lastly, I will close all with a few words of *direction* to all that are made willing to receive the Lord Jesus Christ: and sure it is but need that help were given to poor Christians in this matter, it is a time of trouble, fear, and great temptation: mistakes are easily made, and of dangerous consequence: attend heedfully therefore to a few directions.

Direction 1.

First, In your receiving Christ *beware you do not mistake the means, for the end*: many do so, but see you do not: Prayer, Sermons, Reformations are means to bring you to Christ, but they are not Christ: to close with those duties is one thing, and to close with Christ is another thing: if I go into a *Boat*, my design is not to dwell there, but to be carried to the place whereon I desire to be landed. So it must be in this case, all your Duties must land you upon Christ: they are but means to bring you to Christ. *Direct.* 1.

Direction 2.

Secondly, *See that you receive not Christ for a present shift, but for your everlasting portion*: many do so, they will enquire after Christ, pray for Christ, cast themselves (in their way) upon Christ, and the satisfaction of his blood; when the efficacy and terrour of conscience is upon them; and they feel the sting of guilt within them: but assoon as the storm is over, and the rod that conscience shak't over them laid by; there's no more talk of Christ then: alas, it was not Christ but quietness that they sought: beware of mistaking peace for Christ. *Direct.* 2.

Direction 3.

Direction 3.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, *In receiving Christ come empty handed unto him: believing in him that justifies the ungodly*, *Rom.* 4. 5. and know that the deepest sense of your own vileness, emptiness, and unworthiness is the best frame of heart that can accompany you to Christ: many persons stand off from Christ for want of fit qualifications, they are not prepared for Christ as they should be, (*i. e.*) they would not come naked, and empty, but have something to commend them to the Lord Jesus for acceptance. O this is the pride of mens hearts, and the snare of the Devil: let him that hath no money come: you are not to come to Christ because you are qualified, but that you may be qualified with whatever you want, and the best qualification you can bring with you, is a deep sense that you have no worth nor excellency at all in you.

Direction 4.

Direct. 4. Fourthly, *In receiving Christ, beware of dangerous delays.* O follow on that work till it be finished: you read of some that are almost perswaded, and others not far from the kingdome of God. O take heed of sticking in the birth, *Hosea* 13. 13. delays here are full of danger, life is uncertain, so are means of grace too: the man-slayer needed no motives to quicken his flight to the refuge City.

Direction 5.

Direct. 5. Fifthly, *See that you receive all Christ with all your heart:* to receive all Christ is to receive his person cloathed with all his offices; and to receive him with all your heart, is to receive him into your understanding, will, and all the affections, *Acts* 8. 37. As there is nothing in Christ that may be refused, so there is nothiug in you from which he must be excluded.

Direction 6.

Direction 6.

Laſtly, Underſtand that the opening of your hearts to receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is not a work done by any power of your own, but the arm of the Lord is revealed therein, *Iſa.* 53. 1. It is therefore your duty and intereſt to be daily at the feet of God, pouring out your ſouls to him in ſecret, for abilities to believe. And ſo much as to our actual reception of Chriſt. *Direct.* 6.

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

The Eighth SERMON.

Serm. 8.

PSAL. 45. 7.

——Therefore God thy God, hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows.

Text. Setting forth the Believers fellowſhip with Chriſt, the next end of his Application to them.

THE Method of grace in uniting ſouls with Jeſus Chriſt, hath been opened in the former diſcourſes, thus doth the Spirit (whoſe office it is) make application of Chriſt to Gods elect: The reſult and next fruit whereof is *Communion* with Chriſt in his graces and benefits: our *Myſtical* union is the very ground-work and foundation of our ſweet ſoul-enriching *Communion*, and participation of ſpiritual priviledges; we are firſt ingraffed into Chriſt, and then ſuck the ſap and fatneſs of that root: firſt married to the perſon of Chriſt, then endowed and enſtated in the priviledges and benefits of Chriſt. This is my proper work to open at this time, and from this Scripture.

The words read are a part of that excellent *ſong of love*, that heavenly *Epithalamium*, wherein the ſpiritual eſpouſals of Chriſt

Chriſt and the Church are figuratively, and very elegantly celebrated and ſhadowed. The ſubject matter of this Pſalm is the very ſame with the whole book of the *Canticles*: and in this Pſalm under the figure of *King Solomon* and the daughter of *Ægypt* whom he eſpouſed, the ſpiritual eſpouſals of Chriſt and the Church are ſet forth and repreſented to us. Among many rapturous and elegant expreſſions in praiſe of this glorious bridegroom Chriſt, this is one which you have before you. *God thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows:* (i. e.) enriched and fill'd thee in a ſingular and peculiar manner with the fulneſs of the Spirit, whereby thou art conſecrated to thy office; and by reaſon whereof thou out-ſhineſt and excelleſt all the Saints who are thy *fellows* or Copartners in theſe graces. So that in theſe words you have two parts,

Hic Pſalmus prophiticus eſt, continetque Epithalamium quo Chriſti cum eccleſia nuptiæ celebrantur, idemq; habet argumentum quod canticum canticorum, ejuſq; videtur eſſe Epitome. Coc. in Loc.

Viz. { First, The Saints *dignity*, and Secondly, Chriſts *preeminency*.

First, The Saints *dignity* which conſiſts in this, that they are Chriſts *fellows*, the *Hebrew* word-----חֲבֵרֶיךָ is very full and copious, and is tranſlated conſorts, companions, copartners, partakers, or as ours reads it, *fellows*, (i. e.) ſuch as are partakers with him in the anointing of the Spirit: who do in their meaſure receive the ſame Spirit, every Chriſtian being anointed, *modo ſibi proportionato*, with the ſame grace, and dignified with the ſame titles. 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. *Rev.* 1. 6. Chriſt and the Saints are in common one with another: doth the Spirit of holineſs dwell in him? ſo it doth in them too: is Chriſt *King* and *Prieſt*? why, ſo are they too by the grace of Union with him. He hath made us Kings and Prieſts to God, and his Father. This is the Saints dignity to be Chriſts fellows, conſorts, or copartners: So that look whatever grace or ſpiritual excellency is in Chriſt, it is not impropriated to himſelf, but they do ſhare with him; for indeed he was fill'd with the fulneſs of the Spirit for their ſakes and uſe: as the Sun is fill'd with light not to ſhine to it ſelf, but to others; ſo is Chriſt with grace: and therefore ſome tranſlate the Text not *pro conſortibus*, above thy fellows, but *propter conſortes*, for thy fellows: making Chriſt the firſt receptacle of all grace, who

1.

Conſortes, participes, ſodales, ſocios.

Vox Hebræa quodcunq; ſocietatis ſive communionis genus ſignificat. Muis.

Rive.

firſt and immediately is fill'd from the fountain the Godhead, but it is for his people who receive and derive from him according to their proportion.

This is a great truth, and the dignity of the Saints lyes chiefly in their partnerſhip with Chriſt, though our tranſlation *above thy fellows* ſuits beſt both with the importance of the word and ſcope of the place.

2. Secondly, But then whatever *dignity* is aſcribed herein to the Saints, there is and ſtill muſt be a *preeminency* acknowledged in and aſcribed to Chriſt: if they are anointed with the Spirit of grace, much more abundantly is Chriſt: *God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

Oleum ipſum eſt limpidum & pellucidum & flammis fomentum & alimoniam ſuppeditat; inde ſumpta metaphora ungere in ſcriptura ſæpe ſignificat ſpiritu ſancto intus animum illuſtrare, & accendere in eo veram agnitionem dei & motus congruentes cum deo. Mollerus in Loc.

By the *oyl of gladneſs*, underſtand the ſpirit of holineſs: compared here with oyl, of which there was a double uſe under the Law, *viz.* a *Civil*, and a *Sacred* uſe: it had a ſacred and ſolemn uſe in the inauguration, and conſecration of the Jewiſh Kings, and High Prieſts: it had alſo a civil and common uſe, for the anointing their bodies to make their limbs more agile, expedite and nimble: To make the face ſhine, for it gave a luſtre, freſhneſs, and livelineſs to the countenance: it was alſo uſed in Lamps to feed and maintain the fire, and give them light: theſe were the principal uſes of oyl. Now, upon all theſe accounts it excellently expreſſeth, and figuratively repreſents to us the Spirit of grace poured forth upon Chriſt and his people: For

Firſt, By the ſpirit poured out upon him, he was prepared for and conſecrated to his offices, he was anointed with the holy Ghoſt and with power, *Acts* 10. 38.

Secondly, As this precious oyl runs down from Chriſt the head to the borders of his garments, I mean as it is ſhed upon believers, ſo it exceedingly beautifies their faces, and makes them ſhine with glory.

Thirdly, It renders them apt, expedite and ready to every good work: *non tardat uncta rota.*

Fourthly, It kindles and maintains the flame of divine love in their ſouls, and like a lamp inlightens their minds in the knowledge of Spiritual things, the anointing teaches them.

And

And this oyl is here call'd *the oyl of gladneſs*, becauſe it is the cauſe of all joy and gladneſs to them that are anointed with it: oyl was uſed (as you heard before) at the inſtalment of ſoveraign Princes, which was the day of the gladneſs of their hearts: and among the common people it was liberally uſed at all their *feſtivals*, but never upon their days of mourning: whence it becomes excellently expreſſive of the nature and uſe of the Spirit of grace, who is the cauſe and author of all joy in believers, *Joh.* 17. 13.

Ἔλαιον ἀγαλλιάσεως dicitur id quod cauſam dat ſummi gaudii. Grot. in Heb. 1. v. 9.

Λυτὸς ὑμῖν αἴτιος τῆς ἀφθαρσίας τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ ἐπισπασάμενος καθ' ὃ ἐσιν ἄνθρωπος τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ ἡμῖν μεταδίδ. OEcum.

And with this oyl of gladneſs is Chriſt ſaid to be anointed *above his fellows*, (i. e.) to have a far greater ſhare of the Spirit of grace than they: *for to every one of the Saints is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt*, *Eph.* 4. 7. but to him the Spirit is not given by meaſure, *Joh.* 3. 34. *It hath pleaſed the father that in him ſhould all fullneſs dwell*, *Col.* 1. 19. and *of his fulneſs we all receive grace for grace*, *Joh.* 1. 16. The Saints partake with him, and through him in the ſame Spirit of grace, for which reaſon they are his fellows, but all the grace poured out upon believers comes exceeding ſhort of that which God hath poured out upon Jeſus Chriſt. The words being thus opened, give us this note.

Doct.

That all true believers have a real communion or fellowſhip with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Doct.*

From the Saints Union with Chriſt, there doth naturally and immediately reſult a moſt ſweet and bleſſed communion or fellowſhip with him in graces and ſpiritual priviledges, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places* (or things) *in Chriſt: in giving us his Son, he freely gives us all things*, *Rom.* 8. 32. ſo in 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. *of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdome, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption:* and once more, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *all are yours, and ye are Chriſts:* what Chriſt is and hath is theirs by communication to them, or improvement for them: and this is very evidently carried in all thoſe excellent Scripture metaphors by which our Union with Chriſt is figured and ſhadowed,

dowed out to us: as the *Marriage Union* betwixt a man and his wife, *Eph.* 5. 31, 32. You know that this conjugal union gives the wife intereſt in the eſtate and honour of the husband, be ſhe never ſo meanly deſcended in her ſelf: the *natural Union* betwixt the head and members of the body, by which alſo the myſtical union of Chriſt and believers is ſet forth, 1*Cor.* 12. 12. excellently illuſtrates this fellowſhip or communion betwixt them: for from Chriſt *the whole body fitly joyned together, and compacted, by that which every joint ſupplieth according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part maketh increaſe of the body*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Eph.* 4. 16. The Union betwixt the graffe and the ſtock which is another embleme of our Union with Chriſt, *Joh.* 15. 1. imports in like manner this communion or partnerſhip betwixt Chriſt and the Saints. For no ſooner doth the graffe take hold of the ſtock, but the vital ſap of the ſtock is communicated to the graffe, and both live by one and the ſame juice.

ubi ego Cajus tu Caja. Uxor clareſcit in radiis mariti.

Now that the ſcope of this diſcourſe be not miſtaken, let the Reader know that I am not here treating of the Saints communion or fellowſhip with God in duties, as in prayer, hearing, Sacraments, *&c.* but of that intereſt which believers have in the good things of Chriſt by vertue of the Myſtical Union betwixt them through faith: there is a twofold communion of the Saints with Chriſt.

The firſt is an *Act.*
The ſecond is a *State.*

There is an actual fellowſhip or communion the Saints have with Chriſt in holy duties: wherein Chriſtians let forth their hearts to God by deſires, and God lets forth his comforts and refreſhments again into their hearts: they open their mouths wide, and he fills them: this communion with God is the joy and comfort of a believers life: but I am not to ſpeak of that here. It is not any *act* of communion, but the *State* of communion, from which all acts of communion flow, and upon which they all depend; that I am now to treat of: which is nothing elſe but the joynt intereſt that Chriſt and the Saints have in the ſame things: as when a ſhip, an houſe, or eſtate is among many partners,

or

or joynt-heirs, every one of them hath right to it, and intereſt in it, though ſome of them have a greater and others a leſſer part. So is it betwixt Chriſt and his people: there is a κοινωνία (*i. e.*,) a fellowſhip or joynt intereſt betwixt them, upon which ground they are call'd *co-heirs with Chriſt*, *Rom.* 8. 17. This communion or participation in Chriſts benefits depends upon the *Hypoſtatical* Union of our nature, and the *myſtical union* of our perſons with the Son of God: in the firſt he partakes with us, in the ſecond we partake with him; the former is the remote, the later the next cauſe thereof.

In the explication of this point I ſhall ſpeak to theſe four things,

1. What are thoſe things in which Chriſt and believers have fellowſhip.
2. By what means they come to have ſuch a fellowſhip with Chriſt.
3. How great a dignity this is to have fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt.
4. And then apply the whole in divers practical inferences.

Firſt, What are thoſe things in which Chriſt and believers have fellowſhip: to which I muſt ſpeak both *negatively* and *poſitively*. 1.

Firſt, The Saints have no fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt in thoſe things that belong to him as God: ſuch as his conſubſtantiality, coequality, and coeternity with the father: 'tis the blaſphemy of the wicked *Familiſts* to talk of being Godded into God and Chriſted into Chriſt: neither men or Angels partake in theſe things, they are the proper and incommunicable glory of the Lord Jeſus. *Negatively.*

Secondly, The Saints have no communion or fellowſhip in the honour and glory of his *mediatory works*, *viz.* his ſatisfaction to God, or redemption of the elect: 'tis true, we have the benefit and fruit of his mediation and ſatisfaction, his righteouſneſs alſo is imputed to us for our perſonal juſtification, but we ſhare not in the leaſt with Chriſt in the glory of this work: nor have we an inherent righteouſneſs in us as Chriſt hath, nor can we juſtifie and ſave others as Chriſt

Juſtitia Chriſti fit noſtra, non quoad univerſalem valorem ſed particularem neceſſitatem, & imputatur nobis non ut cauſis ſalvationis, ſed ut ſubjectis ſalvandis. Bradſhaw de juſtificatione.

Chriſt doth: we have nothing to do with his peculiar honour and praiſe in theſe things: though we have the benefit of being ſaved, we may not pretend to the honour of being Saviours as Chriſt is to our ſelves or others. Chriſts righteouſneſs is not made ours as to its univerſal value, but as to our particular neceſſity: nor is it imputed to us as to ſo many cauſes of ſalvation to others, but as to ſo many ſubjects to be ſaved by it our ſelves.

Poſitively. Secondly, But then, there are many glorious and excellent things which are in common betwixt Chriſt and believers, though in them all he hath the preeminence, he ſhines in the fulneſs of them as the *Sun*, and we with a borrowed and leſſer light, but of the ſame kind and nature as the Stars. Some of theſe I ſhall particularly and briefly unfold in the following particulars.

Firſt, Believers have communion with Chriſt in his *names* and titles: they are call'd Chriſtians from Chriſt, *Eph.* 3. 15. from him the whole family in heaven and earth is named: this is that worthy name the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *James* 2. 7. He is the ſon of God, and they alſo by their union with him have power or authority to become the ſons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12. He is the heir of all things, and they are joynt heirs with him, *Rom.* 8. 17. He is both King and Prieſt, and he hath made them Kings and Prieſts, *Rev.* 1. 6. but they do not only partake in the names and titles, but this communion conſiſts in things as well as titles: and therefore

Secondly, They have communion with him in his *righteouſneſs*, (i. e.) the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is made theirs, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. and he is *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, *Jer.* 23. 6. 'Tis true, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is not inherent in us, as it is in him; but it is ours by imputation, *Rom.* 4. 5. 11. and our union with him is the ground of the imputation of his righteouſneſs to us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *we are made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, *Phil.* 3. 9. for Chriſt and believers are conſidered as one perſon, in conſtruction of Law; as a man and his wife, a *debtor* and *ſurety* are one: and ſo his payment or ſatisfaction is in our name, or upon our account.

Now

Now this is a moſt ineſtimable priviledge, the very ground of all our other bleſſings and mercies. O what a benefit is this to a poor ſinner, that owes to God infinitely more than he is ever able to pay him, by doing or ſuffering; to have ſuch a rich treaſure of *merit* as lyes in the obedience of Chriſt, to diſcharge in one entire payment all his debts to the leaſt farthing? *Surely ſhall one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs, Iſa.* 45. 24. even as a poor woman that owes more than ſhe is worth, in one moment is diſcharged of all her obligations, by her marriage to a wealthy man.

Thirdly, Believers have communion with Chriſt in his *holineſs* or Sanctification, for of God he is made unto them not only righteouſneſs, but *Sanctification* alſo: and as in the former priviledge they have a ſtock of merit in the blood of Chriſt to juſtifie them, ſo here they have the Spirit of Chriſt to ſanctifie them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. and therefore we are ſaid of his fulneſs to receive *grace* for grace, *Joh.* 1. 16. (*i. e.*) ſay ſome, grace upon grace, manifold graces or abundance of grace: or *grace for grace*, that is, grace anſwerable to grace: as in the ſeal and wax, there is line for line, and cut for cut exactly anſwerable to each other: or grace for grace, that is, ſay others, the free grace of God in Chriſt for the ſanctification or filling of our ſouls with grace: be it in which ſenſe it will, it ſhews the communion believers have with Jeſus Chriſt in grace and holineſs. Now holineſs is the moſt precious thing in the world, it's the image of God, and chief excellency of man: it is our evidence for glory, yea, and the firſt-fruits of glory: in Chriſt dwells the fulneſs of grace, and from him our head it is derived and communicated to us: thus he that ſanctifieth and they that are ſanctified are all of one, *Heb.* 2. 11. You would think it no ſmall priviledge to have Baggs of Gold to go to, and enrich your ſelves with, and yet that were but a very trifle in compariſon to have Chriſts righteouſneſs and holineſs to go to for your Juſtification and Sanctification. More particularly,

Fourthly, Believers have communion with Chriſt in *his death*: they dye with him, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt*, (*i. e.*) the death of Chriſt hath a real killing and mortifying influence upon the luſts and corruptions of my heart and nature: true it is he died for ſin one way, and we dye

to ſin another way: he dyed to *expiate* it, we dye to it when we *mortifie* it: the death of Chriſt is the death of ſin in believers: and this is a very glorious priviledge: for the death of ſin is the life of your ſouls: if ſin do not dye in you by mortification, you muſt dye for ſin by eternal damnation: if Chriſt had not dyed, the Spirit of God by which you now mortifie the deeds of the body, could not have been given unto you: then you muſt have lived Vaſſals to your ſins, and dyed at laſt in your ſins: but the fruit, efficacy and benefit of Chriſts death is yours, for the killing thoſe ſins in you which elſe had been your ruine.

Fifthly, Believers have Communion with Chriſt in *his life and reſurrection* from the dead: as he roſe from the dead, ſo do they; and that by the power and influence of his *vivification* and reſurrection: 'tis the Spirit of life which is in Chriſt Jeſus that makes us free from the Law of ſin and death, *Rom.* 8. 2. our ſpiritual life is from Chriſt, *Eph.* 2. 1. *and you hath he quickened who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins:* and hence Chriſt is ſaid to live in the believer, *Gal.* 2. 20. *Now I live, yet not I; but Chriſt liveth in me:* and it is no ſmall priviledge to partake of the very life of Chriſt, which is the moſt excellent life that ever any creature can live: yet ſuch is the happineſs of all the Saints, the life of Chriſt is manifeſt in them, and ſuch a life as ſhall never ſee death.

Sixthly, To conclude, Believers have fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt *in his glory* which they ſhall enjoy in heaven with him: they ſhall be *ever with the Lord*, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. and that's not all, (though as one ſaith it were a kind of heaven but to look through the keyhole, and have but a glimpſe of Chriſts bleſſed face) but they ſhall partake of the glory which the father hath given him, for ſo he ſpeaks *Joh.* 17. 22, 24. and more particularly they ſhall ſit with him in his throne, *Rev.* 3. 21. and when he comes to judge the world, he will come to be glorified in the Saints, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. So that you ſee what glorious and ineſtimable things are and will be in common betwixt Chriſt and the Saints. His Titles, his righteouſneſs, his holineſs, his death, his life, his glory. I do not ſay that Chriſt will make any Saint equal with him in glory: that's impoſſible: he will be known from all the Saints in heaven, as the Sun is diſtinguiſhed from the

the Stars: but they ſhall partake of his glory, and be fill'd with his joy there: and thus you ſee what thoſe things are that the Saints have fellowſhip with Chriſt in.

Secondly, Next I would open the way and means by which we come to have fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt in theſe excellent priviledges; and this I ſhall do briefly in the following Poſitions. 2.

Poſition 1.

Poſition 1. *Soli verè fideles ſunt membra Chriſti, idq; non quatenus homines, ſed quatenus Chriſtiani: nec ſecundum primam generationem, ſed ſecundum regenerationem.* Polanus Syntag. lib. 6. cap. 35.

Firſt, *No man hath fellowſhip with Chriſt in any ſpecial ſaving priviledge by nature, howſoever it be cultivated or improved; but only by faith uniting him to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: 'tis not the priviledge of our firſt, but ſecond birth.* This is plain from *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to as many as believed on his name, who are born not of fleſh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man but of God.* We are by nature children of wrath, *Eph.* 2. 3. we have fellowſhip with *Satan* in ſin, and miſery: the wild branch hath no communication of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of a more noble and excellent root, until it be ingraffed upon it, and have immediate Union and coalition with it, *Joh.* 15. 1, 2.

Poſition 2.

Poſition 2. *Believers themſelves have not an equal ſhare one with another in all the benefits and priviledges of their Union with Chriſt, but in ſome there is an equality, and in others an inequality: according to the meaſure and gift of Chriſt,* to every one.

In Juſtification they are all equal: the weak and the ſtrong believer are alike juſtified, becauſe it is one and the ſame perfect righteouſneſs of Chriſt which is applied to the one and to the other, ſo that there are no different degrees of Juſtification, but all that believe are juſtified from all things, *Acts* 13. 39. and there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, *Rom.* 8. 1. be they never ſo weak in faith, or defective in degrees of grace. But there is apparent difference in the meaſures of their Sanctification, ſome are ſtrong men, and others are babes in Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. the faith of ſome flouriſhes and grows exceedingly, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. the things that are in others are ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 2.

It's a plain caſe, that there is great variety found in the degrees of grace and comfort among them that are joyntly interested in Chriſt, and equally juſtified by him.

Poſition 3.

Poſition 3. *The Saints have not fellowſhip and communion with Chriſt in the fore-mentioned benefits and priviledges by one and the ſame medium, but by various mediums and ways according to the nature of the benefits in which they participate.*

For inſtance, they have partnerſhip and communion with Chriſt (as hath been ſaid) in his righteouſneſs, holineſs and glory: but they receive theſe diſtinct bleſſings, by divers *mediums* of communion: we have communion with Chriſt in his righteouſneſs by the way of *Imputation*: we partake of his holineſs by the way of *infuſion*: and of his glory in heaven by the *beatifical Viſion*. Our Juſtification is a *relative* change, our ſanctification a *real* change, our glorification a *perfect* change by redemption from all the remains both of ſin and miſery.

Thus hath the Lord appointed ſeveral bleſſings for believers in Chriſt, and ſeveral channels of conveying them from him to us: by imputed righteouſneſs we are freed from the *guilt* of ſin, by imparted holineſs we are freed from the *dominion* of ſin, and by our glorification with Chriſt we are freed from all the reliques and remains both of ſin and miſery let in by ſin upon our natures.

Poſition 4.

Poſition 4. *That Jeſus Chriſt imparts to all believers all the ſpiritual bleſſings that he is filled with, and withholds none from any that have Union with him: be theſe bleſſings never ſo great, or they that receive them never ſo weak, mean, and contemptible in outward reſpects. Gal.* 3. 27. *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt.* The ſalvation that comes by Chriſt is ſtiled the *common ſalvation*, *Jude* 3. and heaven the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col.* 1. 12. *There is neither Greek nor Jew* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Circumciſion nor uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free; but Chriſt is all and in all, Col.* 3. 11. he means, there is no priviledge in the one

to

to commend them to God, and no want of any thing in the other to debarr them from God: let men have or want outward excellencies, as beauty, honour, riches, nobility, gifts of the mind, ſweetneſs of nature, and all ſuch like ornaments: what is that to God? he looks not at theſe things, but reſpects them, and communicates his favour to them as they are in Chriſt: *he is all, and in all.* The gifts and bleſſings of the Spirit are given to men as they are in Chriſt, and without reſpect to any external differences made in this world among men: hence we find excellent treaſures of grace in mean and contemptible perſons in the world: poor in the world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdome: and as all believers without difference receive from Chriſt, ſo they are not debarr'd from any bleſſing that is in Chriſt: *all is yours, for ye are Chriſts,* 1 *Cor.* 3. *ult.* with Chriſt God freely gives us all things, *Rom.* 8. 32.

Poſition 5.

The Communion believers have with Chriſt in ſpiritual benefits is a very great myſtery, far above the underſtanding of natural men. There are no footſteps of this thing in all the works of creation, therefore the Apoſtle calls it the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, *Eph.* 3. 8. ἀνεξιχνίαστον πλοῦτον τοῦ χριστοῦ: the word ſignifies that which hath no footſteps to trace it by: yea, 'tis ſo deep a myſtery that the *Angels* themſelves ſtoop down to look into it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit,* 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10. *Poſition* 5.

Thirdly and Laſtly, I ſhall in a few particulars open the *dignity* and excellency of this fruit of our Union with Chriſt, and ſhew you, that a greater glory and honour cannot be put upon man, than to be thus in fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, *Joh.* 17. 22. *The glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are one:* and therefore more particularly let it be conſidered

Firſt, *With whom we are aſſociated,* even the Son of God: with him that is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Our aſſociation with *Angels* is an high advancement, for Angels and Saints

Saints are fellow servants in the same family, *Rev.* 19. 10. and through Christ we are come to an innumerable company of Angels, *Heb.* 12. 22. but what is all this to our fellowship with Jesus Christ himself; and that in another manner than Angels have? for though Christ be to them an head of dominion, yet not an head of vital influence as he is to his mystical body the Church: this therefore is to them a great mystery, which they greatly affect to study, and pry into.

Secondly, *What we are that are dignified with this title*, the *fellows* or copartners with Jesus Christ: not only *dust* by nature, *dust thou art*, but sinful dust; such wretched sinners as by nature, and the sentence of the Law ought to be associated with devils, and partakers with them of the wrath of the almighty God, to all eternity.

Thirdly, *The benefits we are partakers of in and with the Lord Jesus Christ*: and indeed they are wonderful and astonishing things, so far as they do already appear, but yet we see but little of them, comparatively to what we shall see, 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. *Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* O what will that be! to see him as he is, and to be transformed into his likeness.

Fourthly, *The way and manner in which we are brought into this fellowship with Christ*, which is yet more admirable. The *Apostle* gives us a strange account of it in 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich:* he empties himself of his glory, that we might be fill'd: he is made a curse, that we might enjoy the blessing: he submits to be crown'd with thorns, that we might be crowned with glory and honour: he puts himself into the number of worms, *Psal.* 22. 6. that we might be made equal to the Angels; O the unconceivable grace of Christ!

Fifthly, *The reciprocal nature of that communion which is betwixt Christ and believers*: we do not only partake of what is his, but he partakes of what is ours; he hath fellowship with us in all our wants, sorrows, miseries, and afflictions, and we have communion with him in his righteousness, grace, sonship, and glory: he takes part of our misery and we take part of his blessedness: our sufferings are his

his ſufferings, *Col.* 1. 24. O what an honour is it to thee, poor wretch, whom a great many would not turn aſide to ask how thou doeſt, to have a King, yea, the Prince of all the Kings of the earth to pity, relieve, ſympathize, groan and bleed with thee, to ſit by thee in all thy troubles, and give thee his Cordials, to ſay thy troubles are my troubles, and thy afflictions are my afflictions: whatever toucheth thee toucheth me alſo: O what name ſhall we give unto ſuch grace as this is?

Sixthly, and Laſtly, *Conſider the perpetuity of this priviledge*: your fellowſhip with Chriſt is *interminable*, and abides for ever. Chriſt and the Saints ſhall be glorified together, *Rom.* 8. 17. while he hath any glory, they ſhall partake with him. 'Tis ſaid indeed 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. that there ſhall be a time when Chriſt will deliver up the Kingdome to his father: but the meaning is not that ever he will ceaſe to be an head to his Saints, or they from being his members: no, no, the relation never ceaſe: Juſtification, Sanctification and Adoption are everlaſting things, and we can never be deveſted of them.

Infer. 1.

Are the Saints Chriſts fellows, *what honourable perſons then are they! and how ſhould they be eſteemed and valued in the world!* If a King who is the fountain of honour, do but raiſe a man by his favour and dignifie him by beſtowing ſome honourable Title upon him, what reſpect and obſervance is preſently paid him by all perſons? but what are all the vain and empty Titles of honour to the glorious and ſubſtantial priviledges with which believers are dignified, and raiſed above all other men by Jeſus Chriſt? he is the ſon of God, and they are the ſons of God alſo: he is the heir of all things, and they are joynt-heirs with Chriſt. He reigns in glory, and they ſhall reign with him: he ſits upon the throne, and they ſhall ſit with him in his throne. O that this vile world did but know the dignity of believers, they would never ſlight, hate, abuſe, and perſecute them as they do! and O that believers did but underſtand their own happineſs and priviledges by Chriſt, they would never droop and ſink under every ſmall trouble at that rate they do. *Infer.* 1.

Infer. 2.

Infer. 2.

Infer. 2. *How abundantly hath God provided for all the neceſſities and wants of believers!* Chriſt is a ſtorehouſe fill'd with bleſſings and mercies, and it's all for them: from him they receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 5. 17. of his fulneſs they all receive grace for grace, *Joh.* 1. 16. all the fulneſs of Chriſt is made over to them for the ſupply of their wants: *my God ſhall ſupply all your need* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *according to his riches in glory by Jeſus Chriſt*, *Phil.* 4. 19. If all the riches of God can ſupply your needs, then they ſhall be ſupplyed. Say not Chriſt is in the poſſeſſion of conſummate glory, and I am a poor creature ſtruggling with many difficulties, and toyling in the midſt of many cares and fears in the world; for care is taken for all thy needs: and orders given from heaven for their ſupply: my God ſhall ſupply all your need. O ſay with a melting heart, I have a full Chriſt, and he is fill'd for me. His pure and perfect righteouſneſs is to juſtifie me, his holineſs is to ſanctifie me, his wiſdome is to guide me, his comforts are to refreſh me, his power is to protect me, his all-ſufficiency is to ſupply me. O be chearful, be thankful, you have all your hearts can wiſh; and yet be humble, it is all from free grace to empty and unworthy creatures.

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3. *How abſurd, diſingenuous and unworthy of a Chriſtian is it to deny or with-hold from Chriſt any thing he hath, or by which he may be ſerved or honoured?* Doth Chriſt communicate all he hath to you, and can you with-hold any thing from Chriſt? On Chriſts part it is not *mine*, and *thine*; but *ours*, or *mine* and *yours*, *Joh.* 20. 17. *I aſcend to my Father, and your father, to my God and your God.* But O this curſed Idol Self! which impropriates all to its own deſigns and uſes. How liberal is Chriſt! and how penurious are we to him! Some will not part with their credit for Chriſt, when yet Chriſt abaſed himſelf unſpeakably for them. Some will not part with a drop of blood for Chriſt, when Chriſt ſpent the whole treaſure of his blood freely

freely for us: yea, how loth are we to part with a ſhilling for Chriſt to relieve him in his diſtreſſed members, when as yet we know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich! O ungrateful return! O baſe and diſingenuous Spirits! The things Chriſt gives us are *great*, the things we deny to him are *ſmall*: he parts with the *greateſt*, and yet is denyed the *leaſt*. The things he communicates to us are *none of ours*, we have no right nor title by nature or any deſert of ours to them, the things we deny or grudge to Chriſt are by all titles *his own*, and he hath the fulleſt and moſt unqueſtionable title to them all: what he gives to us he gives to them that *never deſerved* it; what we with-hold from him, we with-hold from one that hath *deſerved that and infinitely more from us*, than we have, or are.

He intereſted you freely in all his riches when you were *enemies*, you ſtand upon trifles with him, and yet call him your beſt and *deareſt friend*: he gave himſelf and all he hath to you, when you could *claim nothing* from him, you deny to part with theſe things to Chriſt, *who may not only claim them upon the higheſt title his own ſoveraignty, and abſolute property, but by your own act*, who profeſs to have given all in Covenant to him: what he gives you returns *no profit to him*, but what you give or part with for him, *is your greateſt advantage*. O that the conſideration of theſe things might ſhame and humble our ſouls.

Infer. 4.

Then certainly no man is or can be ſuppoſed to be a loſer by converſion, ſeeing from that day whatever Chriſt is or hath becomes his. *Infer.* 4.

O what an inheritance are men poſſeſſed of by their new birth! Some men cry out, Religion will undo you, but with what eyes do theſe men ſee? ſurely you could never ſo reckon, except your ſouls were ſo incarnated as to reckon pardon, peace, adoption, holineſs and heaven for nothing: that inviſibles are *non-entities*, and temporals the only realities. 'Tis true, the converted ſoul may loſe his eſtate, his liberty, yea, his life for Chriſt: but what then? are they

losers that exchange Brass for Gold? or part with their present comforts for an hundredfold advantage, *Mark.* 10. 29. So that none need scare at religion for the losses that attend it, whilest Christ and heaven is gain'd by it: they that count religion their loss, have their portion in this life.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. *How securely is the Saints inheritance settled upon them, seeing they are in commons with Jesus Christ?* Christ and his Saints are joynt-heirs, and the inheritance cannot be alienated but by his consent, he must lose his interest, if you lose yours: indeed *Adams* inheritance was by a single title, and moreover, it was in his own hand, and so he might, (as indeed he soon did) devest himself and his posterity of it: but it is not so betwixt Christ and believers, we are secured in our inheritance by Christ our *co-heir*, who will never alienate it: and therefore it was truly observed by the Father, *Fœlicior Job in sterquilinio, quam Adamus in Paradiso: Job* was happier upon the Dunghil, than *Adam* was in Paradise. The covenant of grace is certainly the best tenure: as it hath the best mercies, so it gives the fullest security to enjoy them.

Infer. 6.

Infer. 6. *How rich and full is Jesus Christ, who communicates abundantly to all the Saints, and yet hath more still in himself than is communicated to them, although all they receive were brought into one heap!*

Take all the faith of *Abraham*, all the meekness of *Moses*, all the patience of *Job*, all the wisdome of *Solomon*, all the zeal of *David*, all the industry of *Paul*, and all the tenderheartedness of *Josiah*: add to this all the grace that is poured (though in lesser measure) into all the elect vessels in the world, yet still it is far short of that which remains in Christ, *he is anointed with the oyl of gladness above his fellows*: and in all things he hath, and must ever have the preeminence: there be many thousand Stars glittering above your heads,

heads, and one ſtar differs from another ſtar in glory, yet there is more light and glory in one Sun, than in the many thouſand Stars: grace beautifies the children of men exceedingly, but ſtill that is true of Chriſt, *Pſal.* 45. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips*: for all grace is ſecondarily and *derivatively* in the Saints, but it is *primitively*, and originally in Chriſt, *Joh.* 5. 26. Grace is imperfect and defective in them but in him it is in its moſt abſolute perfection and fulneſs, *Col.* 1. 19. In the Saints it is mixed with abundance of corruption, but in Chriſt it is altogether unmixed and excluſive of its oppoſite, *Heb.* 7. 26. So that as the heathen ſaid of moral vertue, I may much more ſay of Chriſt, That were he to be ſeen with mortal eyes, he would compel love and admiration from all men, for he is altogether lovely, *Cant.* 5. 16.

Infer. 7.

What delight and ſingular advantage muſt needs be in the communion of the Saints, who have communion with Jeſus Chriſt in all his graces and benefits! *Infer.* 7.

That which we have ſeen and heard declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us, and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. O 'tis ſweet to have fellowſhip with thoſe that have fellowſhip with God in Jeſus Chriſt. Chriſt hath communicated to the Saints varieties of graces in different meaſures and degrees: and as they all receive from Chriſt the fountain, ſo it's ſweet and moſt delightful to be improving themſelves by ſpiritual communion one with another: yea, for that end one is furniſht with one grace more eminently than another, that the weak may be aſſiſted by the ſtrong: as a *Modern Divine* well obſerves: *Athanaſius* was prudent and active, *Baſil* of an heavenly ſweet temper, *Chryſoſtome* laborious without affectation, *Ambroſe* reſolv'd and grave, *Luther* couragious, and *Calvin* acute and judicious: thus every one hath his proper gift from Chriſt, the fountain of gifts and graces, 1 *Cor.* 7. 7. One hath quickneſs of parts, another ſolidity of judge- Mr. *Torſhell.*

ment, but not ready and preſential; one is zealous, but ungrounded, another well principled but timorous; one is wary, and prudent; another open, and plain; one is trembling, and melting; another chearful, and joyous; one muſt impart his light, another his heat: the *Eye*, the knowing man, cannot ſay to the *Hand*, the active man, I have no need of thee. And O how ſweet would it be if gifts, graces, and experiences were frequently, and humbly imparted: but idle notions, earthly-mindedneſs, ſelf-intereſts, and want of more communion with Chriſt, have almoſt deſtroyed the comfort of Chriſtian fellowſhip every where in the world.

Infer. 8.

Infer. 8. *In a word, thoſe only have ground to claim intereſt in Chriſt who do really participate of his graces, and in whom are found the effects and fruits of their Union and communion with him.*

If you have intereſt in Chriſt, you have communion in his graces and benefits, and if you have ſuch communion it will appear in your maintaining daily *actual communion with God* in duties, whereby will be produced,

Firſt, The increaſe of your Sanctification, by freſh participations from the Fountain: as *Cloth* which is often dipt into the *Fat* receives the deeper dye, and livelier tincture; ſo will your ſouls by aſſiduous communion with God. It will alſo be diſcerned,

Secondly, In your deeper humiliation and ſpiritual ſenſe of your own vileneſs: the more any man partakes of God, and is acquainted with him, and aſſimilated to him; the more baſe and vile in his own ſight he ſtill grows, *Job* 42. 5,6. *Iſa.* 6. 5.

Thirdly, It will appear in your more vehement longings after the full enjoyment of God in heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. and *Rom.* 8. 23. you that have the firſt-fruits, will groan within your ſelves after the full harveſt, and ſatisfying fruition: you will not be ſo taken with things below, as to be content with

with the best lot on earth for your everlasting portion. O if these communicated drops be so sweet, what is there in Christ the fountain?

And thus I have opened the method of grace in bringing home Christ and his benefits to Gods elect by Union in order to communion with him.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

The Ninth SERMON.

Serm. 9.

MATTH. 11. 28.

Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest.

Text. Containing the first general use of Exhortation, inviting all men to apply Jesus Christ.

THE *Impetration* of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, being finished in the first part, and the way and means by which Christ is *applied* to sinners in the foregoing part of this *Treatise*, I am now orderly come to the general *Use* of the whole; which in the first place shall be by way of *Exhortation* to invite and perswade all men to come unto Christ, who in all the former Sermons hath

hath been represented in his *garments of salvation*, red in his apparel, prepared and offered to sinners as their all-sufficient and only remedy: and in the following Sermons will be represented in his *perfumed garments* coming out of his *Ivory Palaces*, *Psal.* 45. 8. to allure and draw all men unto him.

For a general head to this Use which will be large, I have chosen this Scripture, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

These words are the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in which there is a vital ravishing sound: 'tis your mercy to have such a joyful sound in your ears this day: and in them I will consider their *dependance*, *parts* and *scope*.

As to their dependance it is manifest they have an immediate relation to the foregoing verse, wherein Christ opens his Commission and declares the fulness of his authority and saving power, and the impossibility of coming to God any other way: *all things are delivered to me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*, v. 27.

This 28 *verse* is brought in proleptically to obviate the discouragements of any poor convinced and humbled soul, who might thus object, Lord, I am fully satisfied of the fulness of thy saving power, but greatly doubt whether ever I shall have the benefit thereof. For I see so much sin and guilt in my self, so great vileness, and utter unworthiness, that I am over-weighed and even sink under the burden of it: my soul is discouraged because of sin. This objection is prevented in the words of my *Text*, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, Q.d. let not the sense of your sin and misery drive you from your only remedy: be your sins never so many, and the sense and burthen of them never so heavy; yet for all that, *come unto me*: you are the persons whom I invite and call. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

In the words three things are especially remarkable.

1. The

1. The ſouls ſpiritual diſtreſs and burthen: *weary and heavy laden.*
2. Its invitation to Chriſt under that burthen, *come unto me.*
3. Its incouragement to that great duty, *I will give you reſt.*

Firſt, The ſouls ſpiritual diſtreſs and burthen, expreſt in two very Emphatical words, οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι, *ye that labour and are heavy laden*: the word which we tranſlate labour ſignifies a labouring even to faintneſs and tiring, to the conſumption and waſt of the ſpirits: and the other word ſignifies ſuch a preſſure by a burden that is too heavy to be born that we do even ſink down under it.

There is ſome difference among expoſitors about the quality of this burthen. *Chryſoſt.* & ſome others after him expound it of burden of the legal rites & *Ceremonies*, which was a heavy burden indeed ſuch as neither they, nor their fathers could bear: under the task and burden of theſe legal obſervances they did ſweat and toyl to obtain a righteouſneſs to juſtifie them before God, & all in vain; and this is a pious ſenſe, but others expound it of the burthen of ſin in general; the corruption of nature, and evils of practice, which ſouls are convinced have brought them under the curſe, and will bring them to hell, and therefore labour and ſtrive all that in them lyes, by repentance and reformation to clear themſelves from it, but all in vain; whileſt they ſtrive in their own ſtrength. Such are they that are here called to come to Chriſt, which is the ſecond thing, namely

Secondly, The Invitation of burthened ſouls to Chriſt. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden: come unto me*, (i. e.) believe in me, lean and reſt your burthened ſouls upon me. I am able to eaſe all your burthens, in me is that righteouſneſs and peace which you ſeek in vain in all the legal rites and Ceremonies: or in your repentance, reformations and duties, but it will give you no eaſe, 'twill be no benefit to you except you come unto me. Faith is often expreſſed under this notion, ſee *Joh.* 6. 37. and *Joh.* 7. 37. and it is to be further noted that [*all*] burthened ſouls are invited

1.
οἱ κοπιῶντες *qui laboratis, ſcil. ad defatigationem uſq; hac enim Emphaſi differt* τὸ κοπιᾶν *à verbo* πονεῖν *quod in genere ſignificat laborare.* Piſcator in Loc. (i. e.) *Qui ſentitis onus peccatorum & ſub illo tantùm non ſuccumbitis. Chryſoſtomus intelligit oneratos legalibus oneribus, nos verò in genere intelligimus univerſos eos qui peccatorum pondere, naturæq; corruptæ malitiâ quam ſentiunt preſſi, ad ejiciendam pravitatem & aſſequendam juſtitiam luctatur.* Muſculus in Loc.

2.

invited to come. *All* ye that labour: whatever your sin or guilt hath been, whatever your fears or discouragements are, yet come (*i. e.*) believe in me.

3. *Quid alibi quæritis, quod non licet invenire? ego is sum qui possum vos juvare solus.* Musc. in Loc.

Thirdly, Here is the encouragement Christ gives to this duty, *And I will give you rest*: ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς——I will refresh you, I will give you rest from your labour, your Consciences shall be pacified, your heart at rest and quiet in that pardon, peace and favour of God which I will procure for you by my death. But here it must be heedfully noted, that this promise of rest in Christ is not made to men simply as they are sinners, nor yet as they are burthened, and heavy laden sinners: but as they come to Christ, (*i. e.*) as they are believers. For let a man break his heart with sin, let him weep out his eyes for sin, let him mourn as a *dove*, and shed as many tears for sin (if it were possible) as ever there fell drops of rain upon the ground, yet if he come not to Christ by faith, his repentance shall not save him, nor all his sorrows bring him to true rest.

Hence Note,

Doct. 1.

Doct. 1. *That some souls are heavy laden with the burthensome sense of sin.*

Doct. 2.

Doct. 2. *That all burthened souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ.*

Doct. 3.

Doct. 3. *That there is rest in Christ for all that come to him under the heavy burthen of sin.*

Doct.

Doct. 1.

Some ſouls are heavy laden with the burthenſome ſenſe of ſin.

I Do not ſay all are ſo, for *fools make a mock of ſin, Prov.* 14. 9. 'tis ſo far from being burthenſome to ſome, that it is a *ſport* to them, *Prov.* 10. 23. but when a mans eyes are opened to ſee the evil that is in ſin, and the eternal miſery that follows it, (ſin and hell being linkt together with ſuch ſtrong chains as nothing but the blood of Chriſt can looſe) then no burthen is like that of ſin: *a wounded conſcience who can bear*? *Prov.* 18. 14. For let us but conſider the efficacy that the Law of God hath upon the conſciences of men, when it comes in the ſpirituality and power of it to convince and humble the ſoul of a ſinner. For then *Doct.* 1.

1. What inward troubles for ſin are.

First, *The memory of ſin long ſince committed is refreſht and revived as if it had been but yeſterday*: there are freſh recognitions of ſin long ſince acted, and forgotten, as if they had never been: what was done in our youth is fetcht back again, and by a new impreſſion of fear and horror ſet home upon the trembling conſcience. *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.* Conſcience can call back the days that are paſt, and draw up a new charge upon the ſcore of old ſins, *Gen.* 42. 21. all that ever we did is recorded and entred into the book of Conſcience, and now is the time to open that book, when the Lord will convince and awaken ſinners: we read in *Job* 14. 17. of ſealing up iniquities in a bag, which is an alluſion to the *Clerk of the Aſſizes*, that takes all the indictments that are made againſt perſons at the *Aſſizes*, and ſeals them up in a bag, in order to a Tryal. This is the firſt office and work of conſcience, upon which

2. The second, namely its *Accusations*, do depend: these accusations of Conscience are terrible things, who can stand before them? they are *full*, they are *clear*, and all of them referring to the approaching Judgement of the great and terrible God.

Prima est hæc ultio, quod se judice, nemo nocens absolvitur. Conscience dives into all sins, secret as well as open, and into all the circumstances and aggravations of sin, as being committed against light, against mercy, against the strivings, warnings, and regretts of conscience. So that we may say of the efficacy of conscience as it is said *Psal.* 19. 6. of the influence of the *Sun*, *nothing is hid from the heat or power thereof.* Come (saith the woman of *Samaria*) *see a man that hath told me all that ever I did*, *Joh.* 4. 29, Christ convinced her but of one sin by that discourse, but conscience by that one fetcht in and charged all the rest upon her. And as the accusations of conscience are full, so they are *clear*, and undeniable: a man becomes self-convinced, and there remains no shift, excuse, or plea to defend himself: a thousand witnesses cannot prove any point more clearly than one testimony of conscience doth, *Matth.* 22. 12. *the man was speechless*, a mute; muzzled (as the word signifies) by the clear testimony of his own conscience: these accusations are the second work or office of conscience, and they make way for the third, namely,

ὁ δὲ ἐφιμώθη *& ille capistratus erat.*

3. Thirdly, The *sentence* and *condemnation* of Conscience: and truly this is an insupportable burthen: the condemnation of conscience is nothing else but its application of the condemning sentence of the Law to a mans person: the Law curseth every one that transgresseth it, *Gal.* 3. 10. conscience applys this curse to the guilty sinner. So that it sentences the sinner in Gods name and authority, from which there is no appeal: the voice of conscience is the voice of God, and what it pronounces in Gods name and authority, he will confirm and ratifie, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. *if our hearts* (i. e.) our consciences, *condemn us*, *God is greater than our hearts*, *and knoweth all things*: this is that torment which no man can endure. See the effects of it in *Cain*, in *Judas*, and in *Spira*, 'tis a real foretast of hell torments: this is that *worm that never dyes*, *Mark* 9. 44. For look as a worm in the body is bred of the corruption that is there, so the accusations and con-

demnations of conſcience are bred in the ſoul by the corruption and guilt that is there: as the worm in the body preys and bites upon the tender ſenſible inward parts, ſo doth conſcience touch the very quick. This is its third effect or work to ſentence and condemn, and this alſo makes way for a fourth, namely,

Fourthly, *To upbraid and reproach the ſinner under his miſery*: and this makes a man a very *terrour to himſelf*: to be pitied in miſery is ſome relief, but to be upbraided and reproached doubles our affliction: you know it was one of the aggravations of *Chriſts* ſufferings, to be reproached by the tongue of his enemies, whileſt he hanged in torments upon the curſed tree: but all the ſcoffs and reproaches, the bitter jeers and *Sarcaſms* in the world are nothing to theſe of a mans own conſcience: this will cut to the very bone. 4.

O, when a mans conſcience ſhall ſay to him in a day of trouble, as *Reuben* to his afflicted brethren, *Gen.* 42. 22. *Spake I not unto you ſaying, do not ſin againſt the child: and ye would not hear, therefore behold alſo his blood is required.* So conſcience, Did I not warn you, threaten you, perſwade you in time againſt theſe evils? but you would not hearken to me, therefore behold now you muſt ſuffer to all eternity for it: the wrath of God is kindled againſt thy ſoul for it: this is the fruit of thy own wilful madneſs and obſtinacy. Now thou ſhalt know the price of ſinning againſt God, againſt light, and conſcience. O this is terrible! every bite of conſcience makes a poor ſoul to ſtartle, and in a terrible fright to cry, Oh the worm! Oh the bitter foretaſt of Hell! a wounded ſpirit who can bear?

This is a fourth wound of conſcience, and it makes way for a fifth, for here it is as in the pouring out of the vials, and the ſounding of thoſe woe-trumpets in the Revelation, one woe is paſt, and another cometh. After all theſe deadly blows of conſcience upon the very heart of a ſinner, comes another as dreadful as any that is yet named, and that is,

Fifthly, The fearful expectations of wrath to come which it begets in the ſoul of a guilty ſinner: of this you read *Heb.* 10. 27. *a fearful looking for of Judgement, and fiery indignation*: and this makes the ſtouteſt ſinner quail and faint under the burthen of ſin. For the tongue of man cannot declare 5.

what it is to lye down and rise with those fearful expectations: the case of such sinners is somewhat like that which is described in *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. *The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life: in the morning thou shalt say Would God it were evening, and at even thou shalt say Would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear, &c.* Only in this it differs, in this Scripture you have the terrours of those described, whose temporal life hangs in doubtful suspense, but in the persons I am speaking of it is a trembling under the apprehensions and expectations of the vengeance of eternal fire.

Believe it Friends, words cannot express what those poor creatures feel, that lye down and rise under these fears and frights of conscience. Lord what will become of me! I am free among the dead, yea, among the damned. I hang by the frail thred of a momentany life, which will and must break shortly, and may break the next moment, over the everlasting burnings: no pleasant bread is eaten in these days, but what is like the bread of condemned men.

And thus you see what the burden of sin is, when God makes it to bear upon the consciences of men, no burden of affliction is like it: losses of deerest relations: sorrows for an only son are not so pungent, and penetrating as these, For

First, No creature enjoyment is pleasant under these inward troubles: in other troubles they may signifie something to a mans relief, but here they are nothing, the wound is too deep to be healed by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ: Conscience requires as much to satisfie it, as God requires to satisfie him. When God is at peace with thee (saith Conscience) then will I be at peace with thee too; but till then, expect no rest nor peace from me: all the pleasures and diversions in the world shall never stop my mouth: go where thou wilt, I will follow thee like thy shadow: be thy portion in the world as sweet as it will, I will drop in Gall and Wormwood into thy cup, that thou shalt tast no sweetness in any thing, till thou hast got thy pardon.

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These inward troubles for sin, alienate the mind from all former pleasures and delights, there's no more taste or savour in them, than in the white of an Egg. Musick is out of tune, all instruments jarr and groan. Ornaments have no beauty, what heart hath a poor creature to deck that body, in which dwells such a miserable soul! to feed and pamper that carcass that hath been the souls inducement to, and instrument in sin, and must be its companion in everlasting misery.

Secondly, These inward troubles for sin, put a dread into death beyond whatever the soul saw in it before. Now it looks like the *King of terrours* indeed: you read in *Heb.* 2. 15. of some that through fear of death are all their life long subject to bondage. O what a lively comment is a soul in this case able to make upon such a Text? they would not scare at the pale horse, nor at him that sits on him though his name be called death, if it were not for what follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8. but when they consider that hell follows, they tremble at the very name, or thoughts of death.

Thirdly, Such is the nature of these inward troubles of spirit that they swallow up the sense of all other outward troubles: alas these are all lost in the deeps of soul sorrows as the little rivulets are in the vast Sea: he that is wounded at the heart, will not cry *Oh* at the bite of a Flea: and surely no greater is the proportion betwixt outward and inward sorrows: a small matter formerly would discompose a man, and put him into a fret, now ten thousand outward troubles are lighter than a feather. For, saith he, *why doth the living man complain*? am I yet on this side eternal burnings? O let me not complain then, whatever my condition be: have I losses in the world, or pains upon my body? alas these are not to be named with the loss of God, and the feeling of his wrath and indignation for evermore. Thus you see what troubles inward troubles for sin be.

2. How souls are supported under such troubles.

Secondly, If you ask in the second place, how it comes to pass that any soul is supported under such strong troubles of Spirit that all that feel them do not sink under them; that all that go down into these deep waters of sorrow, are not drowned in them: The Answer is,

First,

First, Though this be a very sad time with the soul (much like that of *Adam*, betwixt the breach of the first Covenant, and the first promise of Christ made to him) yet the souls that are thus heavy laden do not sink, because God hath a most tender care over them, and regard to them: underneath them are the everlasting arms, and thence it is they sink not: were they left to grapple with these troubles in their own strength, they could never stand: but God takes care of these mourners that their Spirits do not fail before him, and the souls that he hath made, I mean those of his Elect whom he is this way preparing for, and bringing unto Christ.

Secondly, The Lord is pleased to nourish still some hope in the soul under the greatest fears and troubles of Spirit: though it have no *comfort* or joy, yet it hath some *hope* in the bottom and that keeps up the heart: the afflicted soul doth in this case as the afflicted Church, *Lam.* 3. 29. *he putteth his mouth in the dust if yet there may be hope:* he saith, *its good for a man to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of God:* there are usually some glimmerings or dawnings of mercy through Christ in the midnight darkness of inward troubles: *non dantur puræ tenebræ*, in hell indeed there is no hope to enlighten the darkness, but it is not so upon earth.

Thirdly, The experiences of others who have been in the same deeps of trouble are also of great use to keep up the soul above water. The experience of another is of great use to prop up a desponding mind, whilest as yet it hath none of its own: and indeed for the support of souls in such cases they were recorded 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. *For this cause I obtained mercy that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting:* for an encouraging *pattern*, an eminent precedent to all poor sinners that were to come after him: that none might absolutely despair of finding mercy through Christ. You know if a man be taken sick, and none can tell what the disease is, none can say that ever they heard of such a disease before, it's exceeding frightful; but if one and another, it may be twenty, come to the sick mans bedside and tell him, Sir,

ὑποτύπωσις ut & τόπος est primum picturæ lineamentum: sumitur hic pro exemplo, ut viderent quid sibi sperandum sit à domino: gratiam esse uberiorem ac potentiorem peccato, ne quis qui credit diffideret sibi paratam esse veniam. Poli Synopſ. in Loc.

Sir, be not afraid, I have been in the very ſame caſe that you now are, and ſo have many more, and all did well at laſt, why this is half a cure to the ſick man. So it is here a great ſupport to hear the experiences of other Saints.

Fourthly, As the experiences of others ſupport the ſoul under theſe burdens, ſo the riches of free grace through Jeſus Chriſt uphold it: 'tis rich and abundant, *Pſal.* 130. *ult.* plenteous redemption, and 'tis free and to the worſt of ſinners, *Iſa.* 1. 18. and under theſe troubles it finds it ſelf in the way and proper method of mercy, for ſo my Text (a Text that hath upheld many thouſand drooping hearts) ſtates it: all this gives hope, and encouragement under trouble.

Fifthly, Laſtly, Though the ſtate of the ſoul be ſad and ſinking, yet Jeſus Chriſt uſually makes haſte in the extremity of the trouble to relieve it, by ſweet and ſeaſonable diſcoveries of his grace: *cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moſes:* in the Mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen. It is with Chriſt as it was with *Joſeph* whoſe bowels yearned towards his brethren, and he was in pain till he had told them *I am Joſeph your brother.* This is ſweetly exhibited to us in that excellent parable of the *Prodigal*, *Luke* 15. when his Father ſaw him, being yet a great way off, he ran and fell upon his neck and kiſſed him: mercy runs nimbly to help when ſouls are ready to fail under the preſſure of ſin. And thus you ſee both how they are burthened, and how upheld under the burthen.

Thirdly, If it be enquired in the laſt place, why God makes the burden of ſin preſs ſo heavy upon the hearts of poor ſinners, 'tis anſwered,

3. Why doth God make the burden of ſin lie ſo heavy upon the ſouls of ſome ſinners.

Firſt, He doth it to divorce their hearts from ſin, by giving them an experimental taſte of the bitterneſs and evil that is in ſin: mens hearts are naturally glewed with delight to their ſinful courſes: all the perſwaſions and arguments in the world are too weak to ſeparate them and their beloved luſts. The morſels of ſin go down ſmoothly and ſweetly: they roll them with much delectation under their tongues; and it is but need that ſuch bitter potions as theſe ſhould be adminiſtred to make their ſtomachs riſe againſt ſin, as that

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Ἀγανάκτησις *indignatio, stomachatio.* Leigh's Critica, in verb.

word used by the Apostle in 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. signifies, *in that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what indignation it wrought*: it notes the rising of the stomach with rage, a being angry even unto sickness, and this is the way, the best and most effectual way to separate the soul of a sinner from his Lusts: for in these troubles conscience saith, as it is in Jer. 4. 18. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is great, because it reacheth unto thy heart.*

Secondly, The Lord doth this, to make Jesus Christ most welcome and desirable to the soul. Christ is not *sweet*, till sin be made *bitter* to us. Matth. 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that be sick.* If once God wound the heart of a sinner with the stinging sense of sin, then nothing in the world is so precious, so necessary, so vehemently desired, and panted for, as Jesus Christ. O that I had Christ, if I did go in raggs, if I did feed upon no other food all my dayes, but the bread and water of affliction! This is the language of a soul filled with the sense of the evil of sin.

Thirdly, The Lord doth this to advance the riches of his free grace in the eyes of sinners. Grace never appears Grace, till sin appear to be sin. The deeper our sense of the evil of sin is, the deeper our apprehensions of the free grace of God in Christ will be. The louder our *groans* have been under the burden of sin, the louder will our *acclamations* and praises be for our salvation from it by Jesus Christ. *To me* (saith *Paul*) *the chiefest of sinners was this grace given*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. Never doth the grace of a Prince melt the heart of a Traytor, as when Tryal, Sentence, and all preparations for his execution have past, before his unexpected pardon comes.

Fourthly, The Lord doth this to prevent relapses into sin: *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought!* 2 Cor. 2. 7. The burnt Child dreads the fire; the Bird that is delivered out of the *Tallons* of the *Hawk*, trembles afterward at the noise of his *Bells*. *After such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments?* Ezra 9. 13, 14. Ask a poor penitent soul, that hath been in the deeps of sorrow for sin, Will you return to your former course of sin again? and it sounds in his ears, as if you should ask him,

Will

Will you run into the fire, will you go to the Rack again? O no: it hath coſt him dear already. *Nolo tanti emere pœnitentiam.*

Fifthly, Laſtly, This the Lord doth, to make them both skilful and compaſſionate in relieving others that are under like inward troubles. None can ſpeak ſo judiciouſly, ſo pertinently, ſo feelingly to anothers caſe, as he that hath been in the ſame caſe himſelf: this furniſhes them with the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to the weary ſoul: By this means they are able *to comfort others with the ſame comforts wherewith they themſelves have been comforted of God*, 2 Cor. 1. 4. *Haud ignara mali, miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.* Dido.

Thus you have had a brief account, what the burden of ſin is, how ſouls are ſupported under that burden, and why the Lord cauſes ſin to lye ſo heavy upon the ſouls of ſome ſinners. The improvement of all will be in a double Uſe: *viz.*

of { Information, and Direction.

Firſt Uſe for Information. *Uſe.*

Inference 1.

Is there ſuch a load and burden in ſin? *What then was the burden that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt felt and bare for us, upon whom the dead weight of all the ſins of all Gods elect lay!* Iſa. 53. 6. *He hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him.* Our burden is heavy, but nothing to Chriſt. O there's a vaſt difference betwixt that which Chriſt bare, and that which we bear. We feel but the ſingle weight of our own ſins. Chriſt felt the whole weight of all our ſins. You do not feel the whole weight that is in any one ſin: alas, it would ſink you, if God ſhould let it bear in all its aggravations and effects upon you, Pſal. 130. 2, 3. *If thou Lord ſhouldſt mark iniquity, O Lord who ſhall ſtand!* You would quail and ſink preſently: you can no more ſtand under it, than under the weight of a mighty Mountain. But Chriſt bare all the burden upon himſelf: his underſtanding was deep and large: he knew the extent of *Inference* 1.

its evil, which we do not: we have many reliefs and helps under our burden, he had none: we have friends to counsel, comfort and pity us; all his friends and familiars forsook him and fled in the day of his trouble: we have comforts from heaven, he had frowns from heaven: *My God, my God* (saith he in that doleful day) *why hast thou forsaken me?* there's no compare betwixt our load and Christ's.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. If there be such a burden in sin, *Then certainly sinners will pay dear for all the pleasure they find in sin in the dayes of their vanity.* What one saith of crafty counsels, we may say of all sins; though they seem pleasant in their first appearance, they will be found sad in the event: they are honey in the mouth, but the gall of Asps in the belly: they tickle the fancy, but rend the conscience. O sinner, thy mirth will certainly be turned into mourning, as sure as thou livest, that vain and frothy breast of thine shall be wounded: thou shalt feel the sting and pain, as well as relish the sweet and pleasure of sin. O that thou wouldst but give thy self the leisure seriously to ponder those Scriptures in the Margent: me thinks they should have the same effect that the hand-writing upon the plaister of the wall had upon that Jovial King in the height of a frolick, *Dan.* 5. 5. Reason thus with thine own heart, and thou wilt find the conclusion unavoidable: Either I shall repent for sin, or I shall not: if I shall not, then must I howl under the wrath of God for sin in the lowest Hell for evermore. If I shall, then by what I have now read of the throbs and wounds of conscience, I see what this heart of mine, this vain heart of mine must feel in this world. O how much wiser was the choice that *Moses* made, *Heb.* 11. 25. the worst of sufferings, rather than the best of sin, the pleasures of sin which are but for a season!

Consilia callida prima specie læta; tractatu dura; eventu tristia. Livy.

Prov. 20. 7.
Prov. 23. 31, 32.
Job 20. 12, 13, 14.
James 1. 15.
Rom. 6. 21.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. Is there such a burden in sin, *Then the most tender compassion is due debt to souls afflicted and heavy laden with sin.* Their condition cryes for pity, whatever their tongues do: they seem

seem to call upon you, as *Job* upon his friends, *Have pity, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*, Job 19.21. and O let all that have felt the wounds and anguish of an afflicted conscience themselves, learn from their own experience tenderly to pity and help others, Gal. 6. 1. *You that are spiritually minded restore* (or set him in joint again) *in the spirit of meekness, considering thy self.*

καταρτίζετε, *luxata membra in suum locum restituere.*

Israel was commanded to be kind to strangers, for saith God, you know the heart of a stranger: and surely if any case in the world require help, pity and all compassionate tenderness, this doth: and yet how do some slight spiritual troubles upon others? Parents slight them in their own children, Masters in their servants; the more bruitish and wicked they. O had you but felt your selves what they feel, you would never handle them as you do. But let this comfort such poor creatures, Christ hath felt them, and will pity and help them; yea, he therefore would feel them himself, that he might have compassion upon you. If men will not, God will pity you: if men be so cruel to persecute him whom God hath smitten, God will be so kind, to pour balm into the wounds that sin hath made: if they pull away the shoulder from you, and will not be concerned about your troubles, except it be to aggravate them, God will not serve you so: but certainly you that have past through the same difficulties, you cannot be without compassion to them that are now grapling with them.

Inference 4.

How unexpressibly dreadful is the state of the damned, who must bear the burden of all their sins upon themselves without relief or hope of deliverance! Mark 9.44. *where their worm dyeth not, and the fire is not quenched.* *Inference* 4.

O if sin upon the soul that's coming to Christ for deliverance be so burdensome, what is it upon the soul that is shut out from Christ, and all hopes of deliverance for ever! For do but ponder these differences betwixt these two burdens.

First, No soul is so capacious now, to take in the fulness of the evil and misery of sin, as they are, who are gone down to the place of torments. Even as the joyes of Gods face

above are much unknown to them that have the foretastes and first-fruits of them here by faith; so the misery of the damned is much unknown, even to them that have in their consciences now the bitterest taste and sense of sin in this world: as we have the visions of heaven, so we have the visions of hell also but darkly through a glass.

Secondly, No burden of sin presseth so continually upon the soul here, as it doth there: afflicted souls on earth have intermissions and breathing times; but in hell there are no Lucid intervals: the wrath of God there is still flowing: it is in *fluxu continuo*, Isa. 30. 33. a stream of brimstone.

Thirdly, No burden of sin lyes upon any of Gods elect so long, as the damned do and must bear it: our troubles about sin are but short, though they should run parallel with the line of life; but the troubles of the damned are parallel with the endless line of eternity.

Fourthly, Under these troubles the soul hath hope, but there all hope is cut off: all the Gospel is full of hope; it breathes nothing but hope to sinners that are moving Christward under their troubles: but in hell the pangs of desperation rend their consciences for ever. So that upon all accounts the state of the damned is inexpressibly dreadful.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. *If the burden of sin be so heavy, how sweet then must the pardon of sin be to a sin-burdened soul!* Is it a refreshment to a prisoner, to have his chains knockt off? a comfort to a debtor, to have his debts paid, and obligations cancelled? What joy must it then be to a sin-burthened soul, to hear the voice of pardon and peace in his trembling conscience? Is the light of the morning pleasant to a man after a weary tiresome night? the Spring of the year pleasant after a hard and tedious Winter? they are so indeed; but nothing so sweet, as the favour, peace and pardon of God to a soul that hath been long restless and anxious under the terrors and fears of conscience: for though after pardon and peace a man remembers sin still, yet it is as one that remembers the dangerous pits and deep waters from which he hath been wonderfully delivered, and had a narrow escape. O the unconceivable

ceivable ſweetneſs of a pardon! Who can read it, and not wet it with tears of joy? Are we glad when the grinding pain of the Stone, or racking fits of the Colick are ōver? and ſhall we not be tranſported, when the accuſations and condemnations of conſcience are over? Tongue cannot expreſs what theſe things are; this joy is ſomething that no words can convey to the underſtanding of another, that never felt the anguiſh of ſin.

Inference 6.

Laſtly, *In how ſad a caſe are thoſe that never felt any burden in ſin, that never were kept waking and reſtleſs one night for ſin?* *Inference* 6.

There is a *burthened* conſcience, and there is a *benummed* conſcience. The firſt is more *painful*, but the laſt more *dangerous*. O'tis a fearful blow of God upon a mans ſoul, to ſtrike it ſenſeleſs and ſtupid, ſo that though mountains of guilt lye upon it, it feels no pain or preſſure: and this is ſo much the more ſad, becauſe it incapacitates the ſoul for Chriſt, and is a preſage and fore-runner of hell. It would grieve the heart of a man, to ſee a *delirious perſon* in the rage and height of a *fevor*, to laugh at thoſe that are weeping for him, call them fools, and telling them, he is as well as any of them: much ſo is the caſe of many thouſand ſouls, the God of mercy pity them.

Second Uſe for Counſel.

The only further Uſe I ſhall make of this Point here, ſhall be to direct and counſel ſouls that are weary and heavy laden with the burden of ſin, in order to their obtaining true reſt and peace. And firſt, *Uſe* 2.

Firſt Counſel.

Satisfie not your ſelves in fruitleſs complaints to men. Many do ſo, but it's never the near. I grant it's lawful in ſpiritual diſtreſſes to complain to men; yea, and it is a great mercy if we have any near us in times of trouble, that are judicious, tender and faithful, into whoſe boſomes we may pour out our troubles: but to reſt in this ſhort of Chriſt, is no better than a ſnare of the *Devil* to deſtroy us. Is there not a God 1. *Counſel.*

to

to go to in trouble? The beſt of *men* in the neglect of *Chriſt* are but *Phyſicians* of no value. Be wiſe and wary in your choice of Chriſtian friends to whom you open your complaints: ſome are not clear themſelves in the doctrine of Chriſt and faith, others are of a dark and troubled ſpirit as you are, and will but entangle you more. *As for me* (ſaith *Job*) *is my complaint to man, and if it were ſo, why ſhould not my ſpirit be troubled?* Job 21. 4. One hour betwixt Chriſt and thy ſoul in ſecret, will do more to thy true relief, than all other counſellors and comforters in the world can do.

Second Counſel.

2. *Counſel.* *Beware of a falſe peace, which is more dangerous than your trouble for ſin can be.* Many men are afraid of their troubles, but I think they have more cauſe to fear their peace a great deal. There is a twofold peace that ruines moſt men. Peace in ſin, and peace with ſin. O how glad are ſome perſons when their troubles are gone, but I dare not rejoyce with them: It's like him that rejoyces his Ague is gone, though it hath left him in a deep Conſumption. You are got rid of your troubles, but God knows how you have left them: your wounds are skinn'd over, better they were kept open. There's no wiſe woman would deſire to have her pains and throes ceaſe till the Child be born. And ſurely they have much to anſwer, that help on theſe deluſions, healing the hurt of ſouls ſlightly, by crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. The falſe peace you beget in them, will be a real trouble to your ſelves in the iſſue, *Jer.* 6. 14.

Third Counſel.

3. *Counſel.* *Let all that are under inward troubles for ſin, take heed of drawing deſperate concluſions againſt themſelves and the final ſtate of their own ſouls.* Though your caſe be ſad, 'tis not deſperate: though the night be troubleſome and tedious, keep on in the way to Chriſt, and light will ſpring up. To mourn for ſin is your duty; to conclude there is no hope for you in Chriſt, is your ſin. You have wronged God enough already, do'nt add a farther and greater abuſe to all the reſt, by an abſolute

abſolute deſpair of mercy. 'Twas your ſin formerly to *preſume beyond any promiſe*, 'tis your ſin now to *deſpair againſt many commands*. I would ſay as the *Apoſtle* in another caſe, I would not have you mourn as men that have no hope: your condition is ſad as it is, but yet it's much better than once it was: you were once full of ſin, and void of ſenſe; now you have the ſenſe of ſin which is no ſmall mercy: you were once quite out of the way and method of mercy, now you are in that very path wherein mercy meets the elect of God. Keep hope therefore at the bottom of all your troubles.

Fourth Counſel.

Obſerve whether your troubles for ſin produce ſuch fruits and effects in your ſouls, as theirs do which end at laſt in Chriſt and everlaſting peace. 4. *Counſel.*

Firſt, One that is truly burdened with ſin, will not allow himſelf to live in the ſecret practice of ſin: either your trouble will put an end to your courſe of ſinning, or your ſinning will put an end to your troubles. Conſult 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

Secondly, True ſorrow for ſin will give you very low and vile thoughts of your ſelves: as you were covered with *pride* before, ſo you will be covered with *ſhame* after God hath convinced and humbled you, *Rom.* 6. 21.

Thirdly, A ſoul really burdened with ſin, will never ſtand in his own juſtification before God, nor extenuate and mince it in his confeſſions to him, *Pſal.* 51. 3, 4.

Fourthly, The burdens of ſin will make a man ſet light by all other burdens of affliction, *Lam.* 3. 22. *Mic.* 7. 9. The more you feel ſin, the leſs you feel affliction.

Fifthly, A ſoul truly burdened for ſin, will take no hearty joy or comfort in any outward enjoyment of this world, till Chriſt come and ſpeak peace to the ſoul, *Lam.* 3. 28. Juſt ſo the ſoul ſits alone and keepeth ſilence; merry company is a burden, and muſick is but howling to him.

Fifth Counſel.

Beware of thoſe things that make your troubles longer than they ought to be. There be ſeveral errors and miſtakes that hold poor 5. *Counſel.*

poor ſouls much longer in their fears and terrors than elſe they might be: And ſuch are,

Firſt, Ignorance of the nature of ſaving faith, and the neceſſity of it: till you come to believe, you cannot have peace, and while you miſtake the nature, or apprehend not the neceſſity of faith, you are not like to fall into that path of peace.

Secondly, Labouring to heal the wounds that the Law hath made upon your conſciences by a more ſtrict obedience to it for the future, in the neglect of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs.

Thirdly, Inobſervance of what God hath already done for you, in theſe preparatory works of the Law in order to your ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt. O if you would but compare what you now are, with what you lately were, it would give ſome relief: but the laſt and principal thing is this:

Sixth Counſel.

6. *Counſel.* *Haſten to Chriſt in the way of faith, and you ſhall find reſt; and till then all the world cannot give you true reſt.* The ſooner you tranſact with Chriſt in the way of faith, the ſooner you ſhall be at peace, and enter into his reſt: for thoſe that believe, do now enter into reſt. You may tugg and ſtrive, look this way and that, but all in vain; Chriſt and peace come together. No ſooner do you come to him, and roll your burden on him, receive him as he offers himſelf, but the ſoul feels it ſelf eaſed on a ſuddain, being juſtified by faith we have peace with God, *Rom.* 5. 1. And thus in finiſhing the firſt, we are brought home to the ſecond Obſervation.

Doct.

Doct. 2.

Doct. 2.

That Sin-burdened ſouls are ſolemnly invited to come to Chriſt.

THIS Point ſounds ſweetly in the ear of a diſtreſſed ſinner, it is the moſt joyful voice that ever the ſoul heard; the voice of bleſſing from Mount *Gerezim*, the raviſhing voice from Mount *Sion*, *Ye are come to Jeſus the Mediator.* In opening of it I will ſhew,

1. *What it is to come to Chriſt.*
2. *How Chriſt invites men to come to him.*
3. *Why his invitation is directed to burdened ſouls.*

First, We will enquire what it is to come to Chriſt, and how many things are involved in it. 1.

In general, To come to Chriſt, is a phraſe *æquipollent*, or of the ſame amount with believing in Chriſt. It is an expreſſion that carries the nature and neceſſity of faith in it, and is reciprocated with believing, John 6. 35. *He that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth in me ſhall never thirſt.* Coming to Chriſt, is believing in Chriſt; and believing in Chriſt, is coming to Chriſt: they are *Synonyma's*, and import the ſelf ſame thing: only in this notion of faith there are many rich and excellent things hinted to us, which no other word can ſo aptly convey to our minds: as,

First, It hints this to us, That the ſouls of convinced and burdened ſinners, do not only diſcern the *reality* of Chriſt, or that he is; but alſo the neceſſity of applying Chriſt, and that their eternal life is in their union with him: for this is moſt certain, that the object of faith muſt be determinate and

fixed; the soul must believe that Christ is, or else there can be no emotions of the soul after him: all coming presupposes a fixed term to which we come, Heb. 11. 6. *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is.* Take away this, and all motion after Christ presently stops. No wonder then that souls in their first motions to Christ find themselves clogg'd with so many atheistical temptations, shaking their assent to the truth of the Gospel at the very root and foundation of it: but they that come to Christ do see that *he is*, and that their life and happiness lyes in their union with him; else they would never come to him upon such terms as they do.

Secondly, Coming to Christ, implyes the souls despair of salvation any other way: the way of faith is a supernatural way, and souls will not attempt it, until they have tryed all natural wayes to help and save themselves, and find it all in vain: therefore the *Text* describes these *Comers to Christ* as weary persons, that have been tugging and striving all other wayes for rest, but can find none; and so are forced to relinquish all their fond expectations of salvation in any other way, and come to Christ as their last and only remedy.

Thirdly, Coming to Christ, notes a supernatural and almighty power acting the soul quite above its own natural abilities in this motion, John 6. 44. *No man can come to me except my father which hath sent me draw him.* It is as possible for the ponderous mountains to start from their Bases and Centres, mount themselves aloft into the air, and there flye like wandring Atoms hither and thither; as it is for any man of himself, (*i. e.*) by a pure natural power of his own, to come to Christ: it was not a stranger thing for *Peter* to come to Christ walking upon the Waves of the Sea, than for his or any mans soul to come to Christ in the way of faith.

Fourthly, Coming to Christ, notes the voluntariness of the soul in its motion to Christ. 'Tis true, there's no coming without the Fathers drawing; but that drawing hath nothing of *co-action* in it; it doth not destroy, but powerfully, and with an overcoming sweetness perswade the will. 'Tis not forced or driven, *but it comes*: being made willing in the day of Gods power, *Psal.* 110. 3. Ask a poor distressed sinner in that season, Are you willing to come to Christ? O rather than live. Life is not so necessary as Christ is. O with all my heart,

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ten thouſand worlds for Jeſus Chriſt if he could be purchaſed, were nothing anſwerable to his value in mine eyes. The ſouls motion to Chriſt is free and voluntary, *'tis coming.*

Fifthly, It implyes this in it, That no duties or Ordinances (which are but the wayes or means by which we come to Chriſt) are or ought to be *Central* and *terminative* to the ſoul: (*i. e.*) the ſoul of a believer is not to ſit down and reſt in them; but to come by them, or through them to Jeſus Chriſt, and take up his reſt in him only. No duties, no reformations, no Ordinances of God how excellent ſoever theſe things are in themſelves, and how neceſſary ſoever they are in their proper place and uſe, can give reſt to the weary and heavy laden ſoul: it cannot centre in any of them; and you may ſee it cannot, becauſe it ſtill *gravitates*, and inclines to another thing, even Chriſt; and cannot terminate its motion till it be come to him. Chriſt is the term to which a believer moves; and therefore cannot ſit down by the way as well ſatisfied, as if he were at his journeys end. Ordinances and duties have the nature and uſe of means to bring us to Chriſt, but not to be to any man inſtead of Chriſt.

Sixthly, Coming to Chriſt, implies an hope or expectation from Chriſt in the coming ſoul. If it have no hope, why doth it move forward? as good ſit ſtill, and reſolve to periſh where it is, as come to Chriſt, if there be no ground to expect ſalvation by him. Hope is the ſpring of motion and induſtry: if you cut off hope, you hamſtring faith: it cannot move to Chriſt, except it be ſatisfied at leaſt of the poſſibility of mercy and ſalvation by him. Hence it is, that when comers to Chriſt are ſtrugling with the doubts and fears of the iſſue, the Lord is pleaſed to enliven their faint hopes, by ſetting on ſuch Scriptures as that John 6. 37. *He that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out:* and Heb. 7. 25. *He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him.* This puts life into hope, and hope puts life into induſtry and motion.

Venite ad me, (i. e.) affectibus fidei, & ſpei religioſæ, & deſiderii. Burgenſis in loc.

Seventhly, Coming to Chriſt for reſt, implies that believers have, and lawfully may have an eye to their own happineſs in cloſing with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The poor ſoul comes for reſt: it comes for ſalvation: its eye and aim is upon it: and this aim of the ſoul at its own good is legitimated and allowed by that expreſſion of Chriſt, John 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that*

ye may have life. If Christ blame them for not coming to him that they might have life, sure he would not blame them, had they come to him for life.

Eighthly, But Lastly, and which is the principal thing carried in this expression, Coming to Christ, notes the all-sufficiency of Christ to answer all the needs and wants of distressed souls, and their betaking themselves accordingly to him only for relief, being content to come to Christ for whatever they need, and live upon that fulness that is in him. If there were not an all-sufficiency in Christ, no soul would come to him: for this is the very ground upon which men come, Heb. 7. 25. *he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him*: εἰς τὸ παντελὲς, to the uttermost: in the greatest plunges, difficulties and dangers: he hath a fulness of saving power in him; and this encourages souls to come unto him. One beggar uses not to wait at the door of another, but all at the doors of them they conceive able to relieve them. And as this notes the fulness of Christ as a Saviour, so it must needs note the emptiness and humility of the soul as a comer to him. This is call'd submission in *Rom.* 10. 3. Proud nature must be deeply distressed, humbled and moulded into another temper, before it will be perswaded to live upon those terms, to come to Christ for every thing it wants, to live upon Christ's fulness in the way of grace and favour, and have no stock of its own to live upon. O this is hard, but it's the way of faith.

2. Secondly, In the next place let us see how Christ invites men to come unto him, and you shall find the means employ'd in this work, are either *internal* and *principal*, namely the Spirit of God, who is Christ's *Vice-gerent*, and comes to us in his name and room to perswade us to believe, *Joh.* 15. 26. or *external*, namely the preaching of the Gospel by Commissionated *Embassadors*, who in Christ's stead beseech men to be reconciled to God: (*i. e.*) to come to Christ by faith in order to their reconciliation and peace with God. But all means and instruments employ'd in this work of bringing men to Christ, entirely depend upon the blessing and concurrence of the Spirit of God, without whom they signifie nothing: how long may Ministers preach, before one soul come to Christ, except the Spirit co-operate in that work? Now as to the manner in which men are perswaded, and their wills

wills wrought upon to come to Chriſt, I will briefly note ſeveral acts of the Spirit in order thereunto.

Firſt, There is an *illuſtrating work* of the Spirit upon the minds of ſinners, opening their eyes to ſee their danger and miſery. Till this be diſcovered, no man ſtirs from his place: 'tis ſenſe of danger that rouzes the ſecure ſinner, that diſtreſſes him and makes him look about for deliverance, crying, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* and 'tis the diſcovery of Chriſts ability to ſave, which is the ground and reaſon, (as was obſerved above) of its motion to Chriſt. Hence, *ſeeing the Son*, is joyned with believing or *coming to him*, in *John* 6. 40.

Secondly, There is the *Authoritative call*, or commanding voice of the Spirit in the Word; a voice that's full of awful majeſty and power, 1 Joh. 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* This call of the Spirit to come to Chriſt rolls one great block, namely the fear of preſumption, out of the ſouls way to Chriſt, and inſtead of *preſumption* in coming, makes it *rebellion*, and inexcuſable obſtinacy to refuſe to come. This anſwers all pleas againſt coming to Chriſt from our unworthineſs and deep guilt, and mightily encourages the ſoul to come to Chriſt, whatever it hath been or done.

Thirdly, There are ſoul-encouraging *conditional promiſes* to all that do come to Chriſt in obedience to the Command. Such is that in my Text, *I will give you reſt*: and that in John 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out:* and theſe breathe life and encouragement into poor ſouls that hang back and are daunted through their own unworthineſs.

Fourthly, There are *dreadful threatnings* denounced by the Spirit in the Word againſt all that refuſe or neglect to come to Chriſt, which are of great uſe to engage and quicken ſouls in their way to Chriſt, Mark 16. 16. *He that believes not, ſhall be damned. Dye in his ſins*, John 8. 24. *The wrath of God ſhall remain on him*, John 3. ult. Which is as if the Lord had ſaid, Sinners don't dally with my Chriſt: don't be alwayes treating and never concluding or reſolving: for if there be Juſtice in heaven, or Fire in hell, every ſoul that comes not to Chriſt, muſt and ſhall periſh to all eternity: upon your own heads let the blood and deſtruction of your own ſouls be for ever, if you will not come unto him.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, There are *moving and working examples* set before souls in the Word, to prevail with them to come, alluring and encouraging Examples of such as have come to Christ under deepest guilt and discouragement, and yet found mercy, 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief: howbeit (or nevertheless) for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting.* Who would not come to Christ after such an *example* as this? And if this will not prevail, there are dreadful examples recorded in the Word setting before us the miserable condition of all such as refuse the calls of the Word to come to Christ, 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. *By which also he went and preached to the spirits which are in prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long-suffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah.* The meaning is, the sinners that lived before the Flood, but now are in hell, clapt up into that prison, had the offers of grace made them, but despised them, and now lye for their disobedience in prison, under the wrath of God for it, in the lowest hell.

Sixthly and Lastly, There is an effectual *perswading*, overcoming and victorious work of the Spirit upon the hearts and wills of sinners, under which they come to Jesus Christ. Of this I have spoken at large before in the *fourth Sermon*, and therefore shall not add any thing more here. This is the way and manner, in which souls are prevailed with to come to Jesus Christ.

3. Thirdly, In the last place, if you enquire why Christ makes his invitations to weary and heavy laden souls, and to no other: the answer is briefly this:

First, Because in so doing, he follows the *Commission* which he received from his Father; for so you will find it runs in Isa. 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tydings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* You see here how Christs Commission binds him up: his Father sent him to poor broken hearted sinners, and he will keep close to his Commission. *He came not to call the righteous,*

ons, but ſinners (i. e. ſenſible burthened ſinners) *to repentance,* Matth. 9. 13. *I am not ſent (* ſaith he*) but unto the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael.* Thus his Inſtructions and Commiſſion from the Father, limit him only to ſenſible and burthened ſouls, and he will be faithful to his Commiſſion.

Secondly, The very order of the Spirits work in bringing men to Chriſt, ſhews us to whom the invitations and offers of grace in Chriſt are to be made. For none are convinced of righteouſneſs, (*i. e.*) of the compleat and perfect righteouſneſs which is in Chriſt for their Juſtification, until firſt they be convinced of ſin; and conſequently, no man will or can come to Chriſt by faith, till convictions of ſin have awakened and diſtreſſed them, *John* 16. 8, 9. This being the due order of the Spirits operation, the ſame order muſt be obſerved in Goſpel offers and invitations.

Thirdly, It behoves, that Chriſt ſhould provide for his own glory as well as for our ſafety, and not expoſe that, to ſecure this; but ſave us in that way which will bring him moſt honour and praiſe. And certainly ſuch a way is this, by firſt convincing, humbling and burthening the ſouls of men, and then bringing them to reſt in himſelf.

Alas! Let thoſe that never ſaw or felt the evil of ſin, be told of reſt, peace and pardon in Chriſt, they will but deſpiſe it, as a thing of no value, Luke 5. 31. *The whole need not a Phyſician, but thoſe that are ſick.* Bid a man that thinks himſelf ſound and whole, go to the *Phyſician*, and he will but laugh at the motion. If you offer him the richeſt compoſition, he will refuſe it, ſlight it, and it may be ſpill it upon the ground: ay, but if the ſame man did once feel an acute diſeaſe, and were made to ſweat and groan under ſtrong pains, if ever he come to know what ſick dayes and reſtleſs nights are, and to apprehend his life to be in eminent hazard; then meſſengers are ſent one after another in poſt-haſte to the Phyſician; then he begs him with tears to do what in him lyes for his relief; he thankfully takes the bittereſt potions, and praiſes the care and skill of his Phyſician with tears of joy; and ſo the Patients ſafety and the Phyſicians honour are both ſecured. So is it in this method of grace. The Uſes follow.

Use. *Inference* 1.

Inference 1. If sin-burthened souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ, *Then it follows, that whatever guilt lye upon the Conscience of a poor humbled sinner, 'tis no presumption, but his duty to come to Christ notwithstanding his own apprehended vileness and great unworthiness.*

Let it be carefully observed how happily that universal particle *all* is inserted in Christs invitation for the encouragement of sinners. *Come unto me* [*All*] *ye that labour: q. d.* let no broken-hearted sinner exclude himself, whenas he is not by me excluded from mercy: my grace is my own, I may bestow it where I will, and upon whom I will. 'Tis not I, but *Satan* that impales and incloses my mercy from humbled souls that are made willing to come unto me: he calls that your *presumption*, which my invitation makes your *Duty*.

Object. 1. But I doubt my case is excepted by Christ himself in *Matth.* 12. 31. where blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is exempted from pardon: and I have had many horrid blasphemous thoughts injected into my soul.

Sol. Art thou a burdened and heavy laden soul? If so, thy case is not in that, or any other Scripture exempted from mercy: for the unpardonable sin is alwayes found in an impenitent heart: as that sin finds no pardon with God, so neither is it followed with contrition and sorrow in the soul that commits it.

Object. 2. But if I am not guilty of that sin, I am certainly guilty of many great and heinous abominations of another kind, too great for me to expect mercy for, and therefore I dare not go to Christ.

Sol. The greater your sins have been, the more need you have to go to Jesus Christ. Let not a *Motive* to Christ, be made an *Obstacle* in your way to him. Great sinners are expresly called *Isa.* 1. 18. great sinners have come to Christ and found mercy, 1 *Cor.* 6. 7. And to conclude, it's an high reproach and dishonour to the blood of Christ, and mercy of God which flowes so freely through him, to object the greatness of sin to either of them. Certainly you have not sinned beyond the *extent of mercy*, or beyond the *efficacy of the blood of Christ*:

of *Christ*: but pardon and peace may be had, if you will thus come to Christ for it.

Oh but it's now too late; I have had many thousand calls by the Gospel, and refused them; many purposes in my heart to go to Christ, and quenched them: my time therefore is past, and now 'tis to no purpose. 3. *Obj.*

If the time of grace be past, and God intends no mercy for thee, how comes it to pass thy soul is now filled with trouble and distress for sin? Is this the frame of a mans heart that is past hope? Do such signs as these appear in men that are hopeless? Beside, the time of grace is a *secret* hid in the breast of God; but coming to Christ is a *duty* plainly revealed in the *Text*: and why will you object a thing that is secret and uncertain, against a duty that is so plain and evident? Nor do you your selves believe what you object: for at the same time that you say your seasons are over, it is too late; you are notwithstanding found repenting, mourning, praying and striving to come to Christ. Certainly if you knew it were too late, you would not be found labouring in the use of means. Go on therefore, and the Lord be with you. 'Tis not presumption but obedience, to come when Christ calls; as here he doth, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden:* *Sol.*

Inference 2.

Hence it follows, *That none have cause to be troubled, when God makes the souls of their friends or relations sick with the sense of sin.* It was the saying (as I remember) of *Hierom* to *Sabinian*, Nothing (said he) makes my heart sadder, than that nothing can make thy heart sad. 'Tis matter of joy to all that rightly understand the matter, when God smites the heart of any man with the painful sense of sin; of such sickness it may be said, *This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.* Yet how do many carnal relations lament and bewail this as a misery, as an undoing to their friends and acquaintance; as if then they must be reckon'd lost, and never till then that Christ is finding and saving them. O if your hearts were spiritual and wise, their groans for sin, would be as musick in your ears. When they go alone to *Inference* 2.

bewail their sin, you would go alone also to bless God for such a mercy; that ever you should live to such a happy day: you would say, now is my friend in the blessed pangs of the new birth: now is he in the very way of mercy: never in so hopeful a condition as now. I had rather he should groan now at the feet of Christ, than groan hereafter under the wrath of God for ever. O Parents, beware as you love the souls of your Children, that you don't damp and discourage them, tempt or threaten them, divert or hinder them in such cases as this; lest you bring the blood of their souls upon your own heads.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. It also follows from hence, *That those to whom sin was never any burthen, are not yet come to Christ, nor have they any interest in him.* We may as well suppose a Child to be born without any pangs or throes, as a soul to be born again, and united to Christ without any sense or sorrow for sin. I know many have great *frights* of *conscience*, that never were made duly sensible of the evil of sin: many are afraid of *burning*, that never were afraid of *sinning*. Slight and transient troubles some have had, but it's vanisht like an early cloud, lickt up like a morning dew. Few men are without checks and throbs of conscience at one time or other, but instead of going to the Closet, they run to the *Ale house* or *Tavern* for a cure: If their sorrow for sin had been right, nothing but the sprinkling of the blood of Christ could have appeased their consciences, *Heb.* 10. 22. How cold should the consideration of this thing strike to the hearts of such persons! Methinks *Reader*, if this be thy case, it should send thee away with an aking heart: Thou hast not yet tasted the bitterness of sin, and if thou do not, then shalt thou never taste the sweetness of Christ, his pardons and peace.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *How great a mercy is it for sin-burthened souls, to be within the sound and call of Christ in the Gospel!*

There

There be many thouſands in the *Pagan* and *Popiſh* parts of the world, that labour under diſtreſſes of conſcience as well as we, but have no ſuch reliefs or means of peace and comfort as we have that live within the joyful ſound of the Goſpel. If the conſcience of a *Papiſt* be burdened with guilt, all the relief he hath, is to afflict his body to quiet his ſoul: a penance or pilgrimage is all the relief they have. If a *Pagan* be in trouble for ſin, he hath no knowledge of Chriſt, nor notion of a ſatisfaction made by him. The voice of nature is, Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul? The damned endure the terrible blows and wounds of conſcience for ſin, they roar under that terrible laſh, but no voice of peace or pardon is heard among them. It is not, *come unto me ye that labour and are heavy laden*, but *depart from me ye curſed.*

Bleſſed are your ears, for you hear the voice of peace, you are come to Jeſus the Mediator, and to the blood of ſprinkling. O you can never ſet a due value upon this priviledge.

Inference 5.

How ſweet and unſpeakably relieving is the cloſing of a burdened ſoul with Jeſus Chriſt by faith! 'Tis reſt to the weary ſoul. *Inference* 5.

Soul troubles are ſpending and waſting troubles. The pains of a diſtreſſed conſcience are the moſt acute pains. A poor ſoul would fain be at reſt, but knows not where: he tryes this duty and that, but finds none: at laſt he falls into the way of believing; he caſts himſelf with his burden of guilt and fear upon Chriſt, and there is the reſt his ſoul deſired. Chriſt and reſt come together: till faith bring you to the boſome of Jeſus, you can find no true reſt; the ſoul is rolling and toſſing, ſick and weary upon the billows of its own guilt and fears. Now the ſoul is come like a Ship toſſed with ſtorms and tempeſts, out of a raging *Ocean* into the quiet harbour, or like a *loſt Sheep* that hath been wandring in wearineſs, hunger and danger, into the fold. Is a ſoft bed in a quiet chamber ſweet to one that is ſpent and tired with travel? Is the ſight of a ſhoar ſweet to the *ſhipwrackt Mariner* that looks for nothing but death? much more ſweet is

Christ to a soul that comes to him pressed in conscience, and broken in spirit under the sinking weight of sin.

How did the *Italians* rejoyce after a long & dangerous voyage to see *Italy* again! Crying with loud and united voices which made the very heavens ring again, *Italy, Italy*! But no shoar is so sweet to the weather-beaten passenger, as Christ is to a broken-hearted sinner: this brings the soul to a sweet repose, Heb. 4. 3. *We which have believed, do enter into rest:* and this endears the way of faith to their souls ever after.

Italiam, Italiam, laeto clamore salutant. Virg.

Inference 6.

Inference 6. *Learn hence the usefulness of the Law, to bring souls to Jesus Christ.* It's utterly useless as a *Covenant* to *justifie* us, but exceeding useful to *convince* and humble us. It cannot relieve or ease us, but it can and doth awaken and rouze us: it's a fair glass to shew us the face of sin; and till we have seen that, we cannot see the face of Jesus Christ.

The Law like the *Fiery Serpents* smites, stings and torments the conscience: this drives us to the Lord Jesus lifted up in the Gospel, like the *Brazen Serpent* in the Wilderness to heal us. The use of the Law, is to make us feel our *sickness*; this makes us look out for a *Physician*. *I was alive once without the Law* (saith *Paul*) *but when the Commandment came sin revived, and I dyed*, Rom. 7. 9. The hard, vain, proud hearts of men require such an hammer to break them to pieces.

Inference 7.

Inference 7. *It's the immediate duty of weary and heavy laden sinners to come to Christ by faith, and not stand off from Christ, or delay to accept him upon any pretence whatsoever.*

Christ invites and commands such to come unto him, 'tis therefore your sin to neglect, draw back, or deferr, whatever seeming reasons and pretences there may be to the contrary. When the *Jaylor* was brought (where I suppose thee now to be) to a pinching distress that made him cry, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* the very next counsel the *Apostles* gave him, was, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts 16. 30, 31. And for your encouragement

ragement know, he that calleth you to come, knows your burden, what your ſins have been, and troubles are, yet he calls you: if your ſin hinder not Chriſt from *calling*, neither ſhould it hinder you from *coming*. He that calls you, is able to eaſe you; *to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. Whatever fulneſs of ſin be in you, there is a greater fulneſs of ſaving power in Chriſt. Moreover, he that calls you to come, never yet rejected any poor burdened ſoul that came to him: and hath ſaid he never will, Joh. 6. 37, *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Fear not therefore, he will not begin with thee, or make thee the firſt inſtance and example of the feared rejection.

And Laſtly, Bethink thy ſelf, what wilt thou do, and whither wilt thou go in this caſe, if not to Jeſus Chriſt? Nothing ſhall eaſe or relieve thee, till thou doſt come to him. Thou art under an happy neceſſity to go to him. With him only is found reſt for the weary ſoul. Which brings us to the third and laſt Obſervation.

Doct. 3.

Doct. 3.

That there is reſt in Chriſt for all that come unto him under the heavy burden of Sin.

REST, is a ſweet word to a weary ſoul, all ſeek it, none but believers find it. *We which have believed* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *do enter into reſt*, Heb. 4. 3. he doth not ſay they *ſhall*, but they *do* enter into reſt; noting their ſpiritual reſt to be already begun by faith on earth in the tranquillity of conſcience, and ſhall be conſummated in heaven in the full enjoyment of God. There is a ſweet calm upon the troubled ſoul after believing, an eaſe or reſt of the mind, which is an unſpeakable mercy to a poor weary ſoul. Chriſt is to it, as the *Ark* was to the *Dove* when ſhe wandred over the watery World, and found not a place to

Non dicit εἰσήλθομεν *ingreſſi ſumus, ſed* εἰσερχόμεθα *ingredimur, ſignificans, initia quietis fideles nunc habere: plenam quietem ſuo tempore conſecuturos.* Pareus in loc.

to rest the soal of her foot. Faith centres the unquiet spirit of man in Christ, brings it to repose it self and its burden on him. It is the souls dropping *anchor* in a storm, which stayes and settles it.

The great debate which cost so many anxious thoughts, is now issued into this resolution; I will venture my all upon Christ, let him do with me as seemeth him good. It was impossible for the soul to find rest whilest it knew not where to bestow it self, or how to be secured from the wrath to come; but when all is embarqued in Christ for eternity, and the soul fully resolved to lean upon him, and trust to him; now it feels the very *initials* of eternal rest in it self: it finds an heavy burden unloaded from its shoulders: it is come as it were into a new world: the case is strangely altered. The word *rest* in this place notes, (and is so rendered by some) a *recreation*: 'tis restored, renewed and recreated as it were, by that sweet repose it hath upon Christ. Believers know, that faith is the sweetest recreation you can take. Others seek to divert and lose their troubles by sinful recreations, vain company and the like; but they little know what that recreation, and sweet restoring rest that faith gives the soul, is. You find in Christ what they seek in vain among the creatures. Believing is the highest recreation known in this world. But to prevent mistakes, three *Cautions* need to be premised, lest we do *in ipso limine impingere*, stumble at the threshold, and so lose our way all along afterward.

Recreabo vos, nempe à lassitudine, à molestia, & onere. Vatab. & Erasm.

Caution 1.

Caution 1. *You are not to conceive, that all the souls fears, troubles and sorrows are presently over and at an end, as soon as it is come to Christ by faith.* They will have many troubles in the world after that, it may be more than ever they had in their lives: *Our flesh* (saith *Paul*) *had no rest*, 2 Cor. 7. 5. They will be infested with many temptations after that, it may be the assaults of Satan may be more violent upon their souls than ever: *horribilia de deo, terribilia de fide*: Injections that make the very bones to quake, and the belly to tremble: they will not be freed from sin, that rest remains for the people of God,

Luther upon his conversion was so buffeted by Satan, *ut nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vox superesset.*

God, nor from inward trouble and grief of ſoul about ſin. Theſe things are not to be expected preſently.

Caution 2.

We may not think that all believers do immediately enter into the full actual ſenſe of reſt and comfort; but they preſently enter into the ſtate of reſt. Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, Rom. 5. 1. (*i. e.*) we enter into the ſtate of peace immediately. *Peace is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart*, Pſal. 97. 11. And he is a rich man that hath a thouſand *acres* of corn in the ground, as well as he that hath ſo much in his barn, or the money in his purſe. They have reſt and peace in the *ſeed* of it, when they have it not in the *fruit*: they have reſt in the *promiſe*, when they have it not in *poſſeſſion*: and he is a rich man that hath good *Bonds* and *Bills* for a great ſumm of money, if he have not twelve pence in his pocket. All believers have the promiſe, have reſt and peace granted them under Gods own hand in many promiſes; which faith brings them under: and we know that the truth and faithfulneſs of God ſtands engaged to make good every line and word of the promiſe to them. So that though they have not a full and clear actual ſenſe and feeling of reſt, they are nevertheleſs by faith come into the ſtate of reſt. *Caution* 2.

Caution 3.

We may not conceive, that faith it ſelf is the ſouls reſt, but the means and inſtrument of it only. We cannot find reſt in any work or duty of our own, but we may find it in Chriſt, whom faith apprehends for Juſtification and Salvation. *Caution* 3.

Having thus guarded the point againſt miſapprehenſions by theſe needful cautions, I ſhall next ſhew you, how our coming to Chriſt by faith brings us to reſt in him. And here let it be conſidered what thoſe things are that burden, grieve and diſquiet the ſoul before its coming to Chriſt, and how it is relieved and eaſed in all thoſe reſpects by its coming to the Lord Jeſus: and you ſhall find,

Firſt,

1. First, That one principal ground of trouble, *is the guilt of sin upon the conscience*, of which I spake in the former point. The curse of the Law lyes heavy upon the soul, so heavy that nothing is found in all the world able to relieve it under that burthen: as you see in a condemned man, spread a Table in *Prison* with the greatest dainties, and send for the rarest *Musicians*, all will not charm his sorrow; but if you can produce an *authentick pardon*, you ease him presently: just so it is here, faith plucks the thorn out of the conscience which so grieved it, unites the soul with Christ, and then that ground of trouble is removed: for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, Rom. 8. 11. The same moment the soul comes to Christ, it is past from death to life; is no more under the Law, but Grace. If a mans debt be paid by his surety, he need not fear to shew his face boldly abroad: he may freely meet the *Sergeant* at the prison door.

2. Secondly, The soul of a convinced sinner is exceedingly burdened with the *uncleanness* and filthiness wherewith sin hath defiled and polluted it. Conviction discovers the universal pollution of heart and life, so that a man loaths and abhorrs himself by reason thereof: If he do not look into his own corruptions, he cannot be *safe*: and if he do, he cannot bear the sight of it; he hath no *quiet*: Nothing can give rest, but what gives *relief* against this evil. And this only is done by faith uniting the soul with Jesus Christ. For though it be true, that the pollution of sin be not presently and perfectly taken away by coming to Christ; yet the burden thereof is exceedingly eased: for upon our believing, there is an heart-purifying principle planted into the soul, which doth by degrees cleanse that fountain of corruption, and will at last perfectly free the soul from it, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*: and being once in Christ, he is concerned for the soul, as a member now of his own mystical body to purifie and cleanse it, that at last he may present it perfect to the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, *Eph.* 5. 26. The reigning power of it is gone immediately upon believing, and the very existence and being of it shall at last be destroyed. O what rest must this give under those troubles for sin?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It was an intolerable burthen to the ſoul to be under the continual fears, alarms and frights of death and damnation. Its life hath been a life of bondage upon this account, ever ſince the Lord opened his eyes to ſee his condition. Poor ſouls lye down with tremblings for fear what a night may bring forth. 'Tis a ſad life indeed to live in continual bondage to ſuch fears. But faith ſweetly relieves the trembling Conſcience, by removing the *guilt* which breeds it; fears. The ſting of death is ſin; when guilt is removed, fears vaniſh. Smite Lord, ſmite, ſaid *Luther*, for my ſins are forgiven. Now if ſickneſs come, 'tis another thing than it was wont to be, Iſai. 33. 24. *The Inhabitant ſhall not ſay I am ſick, the people that dwell therein ſhall be forgiven their iniquities:* a man ſcarce feels his ſickneſs in compariſon to what he did, whilſt he was without Chriſt, and hope of pardon. 3.

Feri Domine, feri, nam à peccatis meis abſolutus ſum, Luth.

Fourthly, A convinced ſinner out of Chriſt ſees every thing againſt him: nothing yields any comfort, yea every thing increaſes and aggravates his burthen, whether he look to things paſt, preſent, or to come. If he reflect upon *things paſt*, his ſoul is filled with anguiſh to remember the ſins committed, and the ſeaſons neglected; and the precious mercies that have been abuſed: if he look upon *things preſent*, the caſe is doleful and miſerable: nothing but trouble and danger; Chriſtleſs, and comfortleſs: and if he look forward to *things to come*, that gives him a deeper cut to the heart than any thing elſe; for though it be ſad and miſerable for the preſent, yet he fears it will be much worſe hereafter; all theſe are but the beginning of ſorrows: and thus the poor awakened ſinner becomes a *Magor miſſabib*; fear round about. 4.

But upon his coming to Chriſt all things are marvellouſly altered: a quite contrary face of things appears to him: every thing gives him hope and comfort which way ſoever he looks: ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *All things are yours* (ſaith he) *whether life, or death; or things preſent, or things to come, all is yours, and ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods:* they are ours (*i. e.*) for our advantage, benefit and comfort; more particularly upon our coming to Chriſt,

Firſt, *Things paſt are ours*, they conduce to our advantage and comfort. Now the ſoul can begin to read the gracious end and deſign of God, in all its preſervations and delive-

rances; whereby it hath been reserved for such a day as this. O! it melts his heart to consider, his Companions in sin and Vanity are cut off, and he spared; and that for a day of such mercy as the day of his espousals with Christ is. Now all his past sorrows and deep troubles of spirit which God hath exercised him with, begin to appear the greatest mercies that ever he received; being all necessary, and introductive to this blessed union with Christ.

Secondly, *Things present* are ours, though it be not yet with us as we would have it; Christ is not *sure* enough, the heart is not *pure* enough; sin is too strong, and grace is too weak; many things are yet out of order; yet can the soul bless God for this with tears of joy, and praise him for this brimful of admiration, and holy astonishment; that it is, as it is; that he is where he is, though he be not yet where he would be. O 'tis a blessed life to live as a poor *recumbent*, by acts of trust and affiance, though as yet it have but little evidence: that it is resolved to trust all with Christ, though it be not yet certain of the issue. O this is a comfortable station, a sweet condition to what it was, either when it *wallowed* in sin in the days before conviction, or was *swallowed* up in fears and troubles for sin after conviction: now it hath hope though it want assurance; and hope is sweet to a soul coming out of such deep distresses: now it sees the remedy, and is applying it, whereas before the wound seemed desperate: now all hesitations and debates are at an end in the Soul, 'tis no longer bivious and unresolved what to do; all things have been deeply considered, and after consideration, issued into this resolve or decree of the will. I will go to Christ; I will venture all upon his Command and Call; I will imbarque my eternal interests in that Bottom: here I fix; and upon this ground I resolve to live and dye. O how much better is this, than that floating life it lived before, rolling upon the billows of inward fears and troubles, not able to drop Anchor any where, nor knowing where to find an Harbour.

Thirdly, *Things to come are ours:* and this is the best and sweetest of all: man is a prospecting creature, his eye is much upon things to come, and it will not satisfie him that it is well at present, except he have a prospect that it shall be so.

ſo hereafter: but now the ſoul hath committed it ſelf and all its concernments to Chriſt for eternity, and this being done, it's greatly relieved againſt evils to come.

I cannot (ſaith the Believer) think all my troubles over, and that I ſhall never meet any more afflictions, it were a fond vanity to dream of that; but I leave all theſe things where I have left my ſoul: he that hath ſupported me under inward, will carry me through outward troubles alſo. I cannot think all my *temptations* to ſin paſt, O, I may yet meet with ſore aſſaults from *Satan*: yet it is infinitely better to be watching, praying and ſtriving againſt ſin, than it was when I was obeying it in the luſts of it. God that hath delivered me from the love of ſin, will, I truſt, preſerve me from ruine by ſin. I know alſo death is to come, I muſt feel the pangs and agonies of it; but yet the aſpect of death is much more pleaſant than it was. I come Lord Jeſus to thee, who art the death of death, whoſe death hath diſarmed death of its ſting. I fear not its dart, if I feel not its ſting. And thus you ſee briefly, how by faith Believers enter into reſt. How Chriſt gives reſt even at preſent to them that come to him, and all this but as a beginning of their everlaſting reſt.

Inference 1.

Is there reſt in Chriſt for weary ſouls that come unto him, *Then certainly it's a deſign of Satan againſt the peace and welfare of mens ſouls to diſcourage them from coming to Chriſt in the way of faith.* *Inference* 1.

He is a reſtleſs ſpirit himſelf, and would make us ſo too: it is an excellent note of *Minutius Fœlix*, Thoſe deſperate and reſtleſs Spirits (ſaith he) have no other pleaſure, but in bringing us to the ſame miſery themſelves are in: he goeth about as a roaring Lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour. It frets and grates his proud and envious mind to ſee others find reſt, when he can find none: an effectual Plaiſter applied to heal our wound, when his own muſt bleed to eternity: and he obtains his end fully, if he can but keep off ſouls from Chriſt: look therefore upon all thoſe objections and diſcouragements raiſed in your hearts againſt coming to Chriſt, as ſo many Artifices and cunning Devices of the Devil to de-

Ad Solamen calamitatis ſuæ, non deſinunt per iri perdere. Minut. Felix.

ſtroy and ruine your ſouls. 'Tis true, they have a very ſpecious and colourable appearance, they are guilded over with pretences of the Juſtice of God, the heinous nature of ſin; the want of due and befitting qualifications for ſo holy and pure a God: the lapſing of the ſeaſon of mercy, and an hundred other of like nature: but I beſeech you lay down this as a ſure concluſion, and hold it faſt; that whatever it be that diſcourages and hinders you from coming to Chriſt, is directly againſt the intereſt of your ſouls, and the hand of the Divil is certainly in it.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. Hence alſo it follows, *That unbelief is the true reaſon of all that diſquietneſs and trouble, by which the minds of poor ſinners are ſo rackt and tortured.*

If you will not believe, you cannot be eſtabliſhed: till you come to Chriſt, peace cannot come to you: Chriſt and peace are undivided. Good ſouls conſider this, you have tryed all other ways, you have tried duties, and no reſt comes; you have tried reformation, reſtitution, and a ſtricter courſe of life, yet your wounds are ſtill open and freſh bleeding: theſe things, I grant, are in their places both good and neceſſary, but of themſelves, without Chriſt, utterly inſufficient to give what you expect from them: why will you not try the way of faith? why will you not carry your burthen to Chriſt? O that you would be perſwaded to it, how ſoon would you find what ſo long you have been ſeeking in vain! how long will you thus oppoſe your own good! how long will you keep your ſelves upon the rack of Conſcience! is it eaſie to go under the throbs and wounds of an accuſing and condemning Conſcience? You know it is not: you look for peace, but no good comes, for a time of healing, and behold trouble: alas, it muſt and will be ſo ſtill, untill you fall into the way of faith, which is the true and only method to obtain reſt.

Infer-

Inference 3.

What cauſe have we all to admire the goodneſs of God, in providing for us a Chriſt, in whom we may find reſt to our ſouls! Inference 3.

How hath the Lord filled and furniſhed Jeſus Chriſt with all that is ſuitable to a Believers wants! Doth the guilt of ſin terrifie his Conſcience? Lo, in him is perfect righteouſneſs to remove that guilt, ſo that it ſhall neither be imputed to his perſon, nor reflected by his Conſcience in the way of condemnation as it was before. In him alſo is a Fountain opened for waſhing and for cleanſing the filth of ſin from our ſouls: in him is the fulneſs both of *Merit*, and of *Spirit*, two ſweet Springs of Peace to the ſouls of men: well might the Apoſtle ſay, *Chriſt the wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. and well might the Church ſay, *he is altogether lovely*, Cant 5. 16. Had not God provided Jeſus Chriſt for us, we had never known one hours reſt to all eternity.

Inference 4.

How unreaſonable and wholly inexcuſable in Believers is the ſin of backſliding from Chriſt? Have you found reſt in him, when you could not find it in any other? Did he receive and eaſe your ſouls when all other perſons and things were *Phyſicians of no value?* and will you after this backſlide from him again? O what madneſs is this! *Will a man leave the Snow of Lebanon which cometh from the Rock of the Field? or ſhall the cold flowing waters that come from another place, be forſaken?* No man that is in his wits would leave the pure cold refreſhing ſtreams of a Cryſtal Fountain, to go to a filthy puddled Lake, or an empty Ciſtern, as the beſt enjoyments of this world are in compariſon with Jeſus Chriſt. Inference 4.

It was Chriſts melting expoſtulation with the Diſciples, *Joh.* 6. 67, 68. when ſome had forſaken him, *will ye alſo go away?* and it was a very ſuitable return they made, Lord, whither away from thee ſhould we go! *q. d.* from thee, Lord, no no, where can we mend our ſelves? Be ſure of it, when ever you go from Chriſt, ye go from reſt to trouble. Had *Judas*

reſt?

reſt? had *Spira* reſt? and do you think you ſhall have reſt? no no, *The backſlider in heart ſhall be filled with his own ways*, Prov. 14. 14. you ſhall have your bellies full of it: *Curſed be the man that departeth from him, he ſhall be as the Heath in the Deſart, that ſeeth not when good cometh, and ſhall inhabit the parched places of the wilderneſs*, Jer. 17. 5. If fear of ſufferings and worldly temptations ever draw you off from Chriſt, you may come to thoſe ſtraights and terrors of Conſcience, that will make you wiſh your ſelves back again with Chriſt in a Priſon, with Chriſt at a Stake.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. *Let all that come to Chriſt, learn to improve him to the reſt and peace of their own ſouls, in the midſt of all the troubles and outward diſtreſſes they meet with in the world.*

Surely reſt may be found in Chriſt in any condition: he is able to give you peace in the midſt of all your troubles here. So he tells you in Joh. 16. *ult. Theſe things have I ſpoken to you, that in me you might have peace; in the world you ſhall have tribulation:* by peace he means not a deliverance from troubles by taking off affliction from them, or taking them away by death from all afflictions; but it is ſomething they enjoy from Chriſt in the very thick of troubles, and amidſt all their afflictions, that quiets and gives them reſt, ſo that troubles cannot hurt them: certainly Believers, you have peace in Chriſt, when there is little in your own hearts: and your hearts might be filled with peace too, if you would exerciſe faith upon Chriſt for that end: 'tis your own fault, if you be without reſt in any condition in this world. Set your ſelves to ſtudy the *fulneſs* of Chriſt, and to clear your *intereſt* in him, believe what the Scriptures reveal of him, and live as you believe, and you will quickly find the peace of God filling your hearts and minds.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

The

The Tenth SERMON.

Sermon 10.

MAT. 9. 12.

But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that be sick.

Text. Wherein the general Exhortation is enforced, by one Motive, drawn from the first Title of Christ.

HAving opened in the former discourses the *nature* and *method* of the *Application* of Christ to sinners, it remains now that I press it upon every soul, as ever it expects peace and pardon from God, to *apply*, and *put on Jesus Christ*, (*i. e.*) to get union with him by faith whilst he is yet held forth in the free and gracious tenders of the Gospel; to which purpose I shall now labour in this general *Use of Exhortation*, in which my last Subject engaged me; wherein divers Arguments will be further urged, both from

The { 1. Titles, and 2. Priviledges } of Jesus Christ.

The Titles of Christ are so many *Motives* or arguments fitted to perswade men to come unto him. Amongst which,

Christ

Christ as the Physician of Souls comes under our first Consideration in the Text before us.

The occasion of these words of Christ, was the call of *Matthew the Publican*: who having first opened his *Heart*, next opened his *House* to Christ, and entertains him there: this strange and unexpected change wrought upon *Matthew*, quickly rings in all the Neighbourhood, and many *Publicans* and Sinners resorted thither; at which the stomachs of the proud *Pharisees* began to swell: from this occasion they took offence at Christ, and in this *verse* Christ takes off the offence by such an answer as was fitted both for their *conviction* and his own *vindication*. But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them; *The whole have no need of a Physician, but they that be sick.*

He gives it (saith one) as a reason why he conversed so much with *Publicans* and Sinners, and so little among the *Pharisees*, because there was more work for him: men set up where they think Trade will be quickest: Christ came to be a *Physician* to sick souls. *Pharisees* were so well in their own conceit, that Christ saw he should have little to do among them; and so he applied himself to those who were more sensible of their sickness.

In the words we have an account of the *temper* and *state* both

Of { 1. The secure and unconvinced } Sinner.
{ 2. The humbled and convinced }
{ And 3. Of the Carriage of Christ, and his different respect to either.

1. First, The secure sinner is here described, both with respect to his own apprehensions of himself, as one that is *whole*, and also by his low value and esteem for Christ, he sees no need of him; *the whole have no need of the Physician.*

2. Secondly, The Convinced and Humbled Sinner is here also described, and that both by his state and condition, he is *sick*; and by his valuation of Jesus Christ, he greatly needs him: they that be sick need the *Physician.*

3. Thirdly, We have here Christs carriage and different respect to both: the former he rejects, and passeth by; as those with

with whom he hath no concernment: the later he converſes with in order to their cure.

The words thus opened are fruitful in obſervations. I ſhall neither note nor inſiſt upon any beſide this one, which ſuits the ſcope of my Diſcourſe, *viz.*

DOCT.

That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the only Phyſician for ſick ſouls. Doct.

The world is a great *Hoſpital* full of ſick and dying ſouls, all wounded by one and the ſame mortal weapon, ſin. Some are ſenſeleſs of their miſery, feel not their pains, value not a *Phyſician*: others are full of ſenſe, as well as danger; mourn under the apprehenſion of their condition, and ſadly bewail it. The merciful God hath, in his abundant compaſſion to the periſhing world, ſent a *Phyſician* from Heaven, and given him his Orders under the Great Seal of Heaven for his Office, *Iſai.* 61. 1, 2. which he opened and read in the audience of the people, Luke 4. 18. *The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach good tydings unto the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted,* &c. He is the tree of life, whoſe leaves are for the healing of the Nations: he is *Jehova Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us; and that as he is *Jehovah Tzidkenu*, the Lord our righteouſneſs. The *Brazen Serpent* that healed the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, was an excellent *Type* of our Great Phyſician Chriſt, and is expreſly applied to him, *John* 3. 14. he rejects none that come, and heals all whom he undertakes: but more particularly I will,

Firſt, Point at thoſe Diſeaſes which Chriſt heals in ſick ſouls, and by what means he heals them.

Secondly, the excellency of this Phyſician above all others: there is none like Chriſt, he is the only Phyſician for wounded ſouls.

Firſt, We will enquire into the Diſeaſes which Chriſt the *Phyſician* cures; and they are reducible to two heads, 1.

viz. { 1. Sin, and 2. Sorrow.

First, The *disease of sin*, in which three things are found exceeding burthensome to sick souls,

1. The Guilt
2. The Dominion
3. The Inherence

} of sin; all cured by this *Physician*, and how.

1. First, The guilt of sin, this is a mortal wound, a stab in the very heart of a poor sinner. 'Tis a fond and groundless distinction that *Papists* make of sins *Mortal* and *Venial*: all sin in its own nature is mortal, Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of sin is death*: yet though it be so in its own nature, Christ can, and doth cure it by the Soveraign Balsom of his own precious blood, Eph. 1. 7. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.* This is the deepest and deadliest wound the soul of man feels in this world: what is *guilt*, but the obligation of the soul to everlasting punishment and misery? It puts the soul under the sentence of God to eternal wrath; the condemning sentence of the great and terrible God; than which, nothing is found more dreadful and insupportable: put all pains, all poverty, all afflictions, all miseries in one Scale, and Gods condemnation in the other, and you weigh but so many Feathers against a *talent* of Lead.

This Disease our great *Physician* Christ cures by *Remission*, which is the dissolving of the obligation to punishment; the loosing of the soul that was bound over to the Wrath and Condemnation of God, *Coll.* 2. 13, 14. *Heb.* 6. 12. *Micah* 7. 17, 18, 19. this remission being made, the soul is immediately cleared from all its obligations to punishment, Rom. 8. 1. *There is no condemnation*: all Bonds are cancelled; the *guilt* of all sins is healed or removed; original, and actual; great, and small. This cure is performed upon souls *by the blood of Christ*: nothing is found in Heaven or earth besides his blood, that is able to heal this disease; Heb. 9. 22. *Without shedding of blood there is no remission*; nor is it any blood that will do it, but that only which dropt from the wounds of Christ, Isa. 53. 5. *By his stripes we are healed*: his blood only is innocent and precious blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. blood of infinite worth and value; the blood of God, *Act.* 20. 28. blood

prepared

prepared for this very purpose, *Heb.* 10. 5. this is the blood that performs the cure; and how great a cure is it! for this cure the souls of Believers shall be praising and magnifying their great *Physician* in Heaven to all eternity, Rev. 1. 5, 6. *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,* &c. *to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Secondly, The next *evil* in sin, cured by Christ, is the *dominion* of it over the souls of poor sinners. Where sin is in dominion, the soul is in a very sad condition; for it darkens the *Understanding*, depraves the *Conscience*, stiffens the *Will*, hardens the *Heart*, misplaces and disorders all the *Affections*: and thus every faculty is wounded by the power and dominion of sin over the soul. How difficult is the cure of this disease! it passes the skill of Angels or men to heal it: but Christ undertakes it, and makes a perfect cure of it at last; and this he doth by his *Spirit*. As he cures the guilt of sin by pouring out his *blood* for us, so he cures the dominion of sin, by pouring out his *Spirit upon us*. Justification is the cure of *guilt*, Sanctification the cure of the *dominion* of sin. For, 2.

First, As the Dominion of sin darkens the *understanding*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. so the spirit of holiness which Christ sheds upon his people, cures the darkness and blindness of that noble faculty, and restores it again, *Eph.* 5. 8. they that were darkness are hereby light in the Lord: the anointing of this Spirit teacheth them all things, 1 *John* 2. 27.

Secondly, As the dominion of sin depraved and defiled the *Conscience*, *Tit.* 1. 15. wounded it to that degree, as to disable it to the performances of all its Offices and Functions; so that it was neither able to apply, convince, or tremble at the word: So when the Spirit of holiness is shed forth, O what a tender sense fills the renewed Conscience! for what small things will it check, smite and rebuke! how strongly will it bind to duty, and bar against sin!

Thirdly, As the dominion of sin stiffned the *Will*, and made it stubborn and rebellious; so Christ by sanctifying it, brings it to be pliant and obedient to the will of God. *Lord*, saith the sinner, *what wilt thou have me to do?* Act. 9. 6.

Fourthly, As the power of sin hardneth the *Heart*, so that nothing could affect it, or make any impression upon it; when sanctification comes upon the soul, it thaws and breaks it, as hard as it was, and makes it dissolve in the breast of a sinner in godly sorrow, Ezec. 36. 26. *I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* It will now melt ingenuously under the threatnings of the word, 2 *Kings* 22. 19. or the strokes of the Rod, *Jer.* 31. 18. or the manifestations of grace and mercy, *Luke* 7. 38.

Fifthly, As the power of sin misplaced and disordered all the *affections*, so sanctification reduces them again, and sets them right, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. And thus you see how sanctification becomes the rectitude, health and due temper of the soul, so far as it prevails, curing the diseases that sin in its dominion filled the soul with. True it is, this cure is not perfected in this life: there are still some grudgings of the old diseases in the holiest souls, notwithstanding sin be dethroned from its dominion over them: but the cure is begun, and daily advances towards perfection, and at last will be compleat, as will appear in the cure of the next evil of sin, namely,

3. Thirdly, The *Inherence* of sin in the soul; this is a sore disease, the very core and root of all our other complaints and ayles. This made the holy *Apostle* bemoan himself, and waile so bitterly, *Rom.* 7. 17. because of *sin that dwelt in him:* and the same misery is bewailed by all sanctified persons all the world over.

'Tis a wonderful mercy to have the guilt and the dominion of sin cured; but we shall never be perfectly sound and well till the existence, or indwelling of sin in our natures be cured too. When once that is done, then we shall feel no more pain, nor sorrows for sin: and this our great *Physician* will at last perform for us, and upon us: but as the cure of guilt was by our *Justification*, the cure of the dominion of sin by our *Sanctification*; so the third and last which perfects the whole cure, will be by our *Glorification*; and till then it is not to be expected. For it's a clear case, that sin like Ivy in the old Walls, will never be gotten out, till the Wall be pulled down, and then it's pulled up by the roots. This

cure

cure Christ will perform in a moment upon our dissolution. For 'tis plain,

First, That none but perfected souls, freed from all sin, are admitted into Heaven, *Eph.* 5. 27. *Heb.* 12. 23. *Rev.* 21. 27.

Secondly, 'Tis as plain, that no such personal perfection and freedom is found in any man on this side death, and the grave, 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. 1 *Kings* 8. 46. *Philip.* 3. 12. a truth sealed by the sad experience of all the Saints on earth.

Thirdly, If such freedom and perfection must be before we can be perfectly happy, and no such thing be done in this life; it remains that it must be done immediately upon their *dissolution*, and at the very time of their glorification: as sin came in at the time of the union of their souls and bodies in the womb, so it will go out at the time of their separation by death: then will Christ put the last hand to this glorious work, and perfect that cure which hath been so long under his hand in this world: and thenceforth sin shall have no power upon them; it shall never tempt them more, it shall never defile them more; it shall never grieve and sadden their hearts any more: henceforth it shall never cloud their evidences, darken their understandings, or give the least interruption to their communion with God: when sin is gone, all these its mischievous effects are gone with it. So that I may speak it to the comfort of all gracious hearts, according to what the Lord told the *Israelites* in *Deut.* 12. 8, 9. (to which I allude for illustration of this most comfortable truth) *Ye shall not do after all the things that ye do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes, for ye are not as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* Whilst you are under Christs cure upon earth, but not perfectly healed; your understandings mistake, your thoughts wander, your affections are dead, your communion with God is daily interrupted: but it shall not be so in Heaven, where the cure is perfect: you shall not know, love, or delight in God as you do this day; for you are not as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you: and so much as to the diseases of sin, and Christs method of curing them.

Secondly, As sin is the disease of the Saints, so also is *Sorrow.* The best of Saints must pass through the vally of 2.

Bacha.

Bacha to Heaven. How many tears fall from the Eyes of the Saints upon the account of outward, as well as inward troubles; even after their reconciliation with God? *Through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God,* Acts 14. 22. It would be too great a digression in this place, to note but the more general heads, under which almost infinite particulars of troubles and afflictions are found. It shall suffice only to shew, that whatever distress or trouble any poor soul is in upon any account whatsoever; if that soul belong to Jesus Christ, he will take care of it *for present,* and deliver it at last by a compleat cure.

First, Christ cures troubles by *sanctifying* them to the souls of his that are under affliction, and makes their very troubles *medicinal* and healing to them. Trouble is a *Scorpion,* and hath a deadly sting; but Christ is a wise *Physician,* and extracts a Soveraign Oyl out of this *Scorpion,* that heals the wound it makes. By affliction our wise Physician purges our corruptions, and so prevents or cures greater troubles by lesser; inward sorrows, by outward ones, Isai. 27. 9. *By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin.*

Secondly, Christ cures outward *troubles* by inward *consolations,* which are made to rise in the inner man as high as the waters of affliction do upon the outward man, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. One drop of spiritual comfort is sufficient to sweeten a whole Ocean of outward trouble. It was an high expression of an afflicted Father, whom God comforted just upon the death of his dear and only Son, with some clearer manifestations of his love than was usual. *O,* said he, *might I but have such consolations as these, I could be willing (were it possible) to lay an only Son into the grave every day I have to live in this world.* Thus all the troubles of the world are cured by Christ, John 16. 33. *In the world ye shall have trouble, but in me ye shall have peace.*

Nihil Corpus sentit in nervo, cum Anima sit in Cœlo.

Thirdly, Christ cures all outward sorrows and troubles in his people *by death,* which is their removal from the place of sorrows to peace and rest for evermore. Now God wipes all tears from their eyes, and the days of their mourning are at an end: they then put off the Garments and Spirit of mourning, and enter into peace, *Isai.* 57. 2. they come to that

that place and state, where tears and sighs are things unknown to the Inhabitants: one step beyond the state of this mortality, brings us quite out of the sight and hearing of all troubles and lamentations. These are the diseases of souls, *sin* and *sorrow*; and thus they are cured by Christ the *Physician*.

Secondly, Next, I shall shew you that Jesus Christ is the only *Physician* of souls: none like him for a sick sinner: and this will be evident in divers respects.

First, None so *wise* and judicious as Jesus Christ to understand, and comprehend the nature, depth, and danger of soul diseases. O how ignorant and unacquainted are men with the state and case of afflicted souls! but *Christ hath the tongue of the Learned, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary*, Isai. 50. 4. He only understands the weight of sin, and depth of inward troubles for sin. 2.

Secondly, None so able to cure and heal the wounds of afflicted souls as Christ is: he only hath those medicines that can cure a sick soul. The blood of Christ, and nothing else in Heaven or Earth, is able to cure the mortal wounds which guilt inflicts upon a trembling Conscience: let men try all other receipts, and costly experience shall convince them of their insufficiency. Conscience may be benummed by stupefactive medicines, prepared by the Devil for that end, but pacified it can never be, but by the blood of Christ, *Heb.* 10. 22.

Thirdly, None so *tender hearted*, and sympathizing with sick souls, as Jesus Christ: he is full of bowels and tender compassions to afflicted souls: he is one that can have compassion, because he hath had experience, *Heb.* 5. 2. If I must come into the *Chirurgeons* hand with broken bones, give me such a one to choose, whose own bones have been broken, who hath felt the anguish in himself. Christ knows what it is by experience, having felt the anguish of inward troubles, the weight of Gods wrath, and the terrors of a forsaking God, more than any, or all the sons of men: this makes him tender over distressed souls, Isai. 42. 3. *A bruised reed he will not break, and smoaking flax he shall not quench.*

Fourthly, None cures in so *wonderful* a *method* as Christ doth: he heals us by his stripes, *Isai.* 53. 5. The Physician dyes

dyes that the Patient may live: his wounds must bleed, that ours may be cured: he feels the smart and pain, that we might have the ease and comfort. No Physician but Christ will cure others at this rate.

Fifthly, None so *ready* to relieve a sick soul as Christ: he is within the call of a distressed soul at all times. Art thou sick for sin, weary of sin, and made truly willing to part with sin? Lift up but thy sincere cry to the Lord Jesus for help, and he will quickly be with thee: when the Prodigal, the embleme of a convinced humbled sinner, said in himself, I will return to my Father, the Father ran to meet him, *Luke* 15. 20. he can be with thee in a moment.

Sixthly, none so *willing* to receive and undertake all distressed and afflicted souls as Jesus Christ is: he refuses none that come to him, Joh. 6. 37. *He that cometh unto me, I will in no wayes cast out:* whatever their sins have been, or their sorrows are; however they have wounded their own souls with the deepest gashes of guilt; how desperate and helpless soever their case appears in their own or others Eyes: he never puts them off, or discourages them, if they be but willing to come, *Isai.* 1. 18, 19.

Seventhly, None so *happy* and *successful* as Christ: he never fails of performing a perfect cure upon those he undertakes: never was it known that any soul miscarried in his hands, *John* 3. 15, 16. other *Physicians* by mistakes, by ignorance, or carelesness, fill Church-yards, and cast away the lives of men: but Christ suffers none to perish that commit themselves to him.

Eighthly, none so *free* and *generous* as Christ, he doth all gratis: he sells not his medicines, though they be of infinite value, but freely gives them, Isai. 55. 1. *He that hath no money let him come*; if any be sent away, 'tis the rich, *Luk.* 1. 53. not the poor and needy: those that will not accept their remedy as a free gift, but will needs purchase it at a price.

Ninthly, and Lastly, *None rejoyces in the recovery* of souls more than Christ doth. O it is unspeakably delightful to him to see the efficacy of his blood upon our souls, Isai. 53. 11. *He shall see the travail of his soul* (*i. e.* the success of his death and sufferings) *and shall be satisfied:* when he foresaw the success of the Gospel upon the world, it's said *Luk.* 10. 21.

In

In that hour Jesus rejoyced in spirit: and thus you see, there is no Physician like Christ for sick souls.

The Uses of this Point are,

For { Information and Direction.

First, From hence we are informed of many great and necessary truths deducible from this: as,

Inference 1.

How inexpressible is the grace of God, in providing such a Physician as Christ, for the sick and dying souls of Sinners! O blessed be God, that there is Balm in *Gilead*, and a *Physician* there: that your case is not as desperate, forlorn and remediless as that of the Devils and damned is. There is but one case excepted from cure, and that such as is not incident to any sensible afflicted soul, *Mat.* 12. 31. and this only excepted, all manner of sins and diseases are capable of a cure. Though there be such a disease as is incurable, yet take this for thy comfort, never any soul was sick (*i. e.*) sensibly burthened with it, and willing to come to Jesus Christ for healing: for under that sin, the will is so wounded that they have no desire to Christ. O inestimable mercy, that the sickest sinner is capable of a perfect cure! There be thousands, and ten thousands now in Heaven and earth, who said once, never was any case like theirs; so dangerous, so hopeless. The greatest of sinners have been perfectly recovered by Christ, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 11. O mercy never to be duly estimated! *Inference* 1.

Inference 2.

What a powerful restraint from sin, is the very method ordained by God for the cure of it! Isai. 53. 5. *by his stripes we are healed.* The Physician must dye, that the Patient might live: no other thing but the blood, the precious blood of Christ *Inference* 2.

is found in Heaven or earth able to heal us, *Heb.* 9. 22. 26. This blood of Christ must be freshly applied to every new wound sin makes upon our souls, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2. every new sin wounds him afresh, opens the wounds of Christ anew. O think of this again, and again, you that so easily yield to the solicitations of Satan: is it so cheap and easie to sin, as you seem to make it? Doth the cure of souls cost nothing? True, it is free to us, but was it so to Christ? No, no, it was not; he knows the price of it, though you do not: hath Christ healed you by his stripes, and can you put him under fresh sufferings for you so easily? Have you forgot also your own sick days and nights for sin, that you are careless in resisting, and preventing it? Sure 'tis not easie for Saints to wound Christ and their own souls, at one stroke: if you renew your sins, you must also renew your sorrows and repentance, *Psal.* 51. *Title.* 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. you must feel the throes and pains of a troubled Spirit again, things with which the Saints are not unacquainted: of which they may say as the Church, *Remembring my affliction, the Wormwood and the Gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance,* Lam. 3. 19. Yea, and if you will yet be remiss in your watch, and so easily incur new guilt; though a pardon in the blood of Christ may heal your souls, yet some Rod or other in the hand of a displeased Father shall afflict your bodies, or smite you in your outward Comforts, *Psal.* 89. 32.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *If Christ be the only Physician of sick souls, what sin and folly is it for men to take Christs work out of his hands, and attempt to be their own Physicians?*

Thus do those that superstitiously endeavour to heal their souls by afflicting their bodies: not Christs blood, but their own must be the Plaister: and as blind *Papists*, so many carnal and ignorant *Protestants* strive by confession, restitution, reformation, and a stricter course of life to heal those wounds that sin hath made upon their souls, without any respect to the blood of Christ: but this course shall not profit them at all. It may for a time *divert*, but can never heal them: the wounds so skinned over, will

will open and bleed again; God grant it be not when our souls shall be out of the reach of the true and only remedy.

Inference 4.

How sad is the case of those souls, to whom Christ hath not yet been a Physician? They are mortally wounded by sin, and are like to dye of their sickness; no saving healing applications having hitherto been made unto their souls: and this is the case of the greatest part of mankind; yea, of them that live under the discoveries of Christ in the Gospel: which appears by these sad symptoms. *Inference* 4.

First, In that their eyes have not yet been opened to see their sin and misery, in which illumination the cure of souls begins, *Act.* 26. 18. to this day he hath not given them Eyes to see, *Deut.* 29. 4. but that terrible stroke of God, which blinds and hardens them, is too visibly upon them, mentioned in *Isai.* 6. 9, 10. no hope of healing till the sinners Eyes be opened to see his sin, and misery.

Secondly, In that nothing will divorce and separate them from their lusts: a sure sign they are not under Christs cure, nor were ever made sick of sin. O if ever Christ be a Physician to thy soul, he will make thee *loath* what now thou *lovest*, and say to thy most pleasant and profitable lusts, *get ye hence*, Isai. 30. 22. till then there is no ground to think that Christ is a Physician to you.

Thirdly, In that they have no sensible and pressing need of Christ, nor make any earnest enquiry after him, as most certainly you would do, if you were in the way of healing and recovery. These and many other sad *symptoms* do too plainly discover the disease of sin to be in its full strength upon your souls; and if it so continue, how dreadful will the issue be? See *Isai.* 6. 9, 10.

Inference 5.

What cause have they to be glad, that are under the hand and care of Christ in order to a cure; and who do find, or may upon due examination find, their souls are in a very hopeful way of *Inference* 5.

recovery! Can we rejoyce when the ſtrength of a natural diſeaſe is broken, and nature begins to recover eaſe, and vigour again, and ſhall we not much more rejoyce when our ſouls begin to mend, and recover ſenſibly, and all comfortable ſigns of life and health appear upon them? particularly when the *underſtanding* which was ignorant and dark, hath the light of life beginning to dawn into it, ſuch is that in 1 *John* 2. 27. When the *will* which was rebellious and inflexible to the will of God, is brought to comply with that holy will, ſaying, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. When the *heart* which was harder than an *Adamant*, is now brought to contrition for ſin, and can mourn as heartily over it, as ever a tender Father did for a dead Son, a beloved and only Son. When its *averſations* from God are gone, at leaſt have no ſuch power as once they had: but the thoughts are now fixed much upon God, and ſpiritual things begin to grow pleaſant to the ſoul: when times of duty come to be longed for, and the ſoul never better pleaſed than in ſuch ſeaſons. When the *Hypocriſie* of the heart is purged out, ſo that we begin to do all that we do heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men, *Coll.* 3. 23. 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 4. when we begin to make Conſcience of ſecret ſins, *Pſal.* 119. 113. and of ſecret duties, *Mat.* 6. 5, 6. when we have an equal reſpect to all Gods Commandments, *Pſal.* 119. 6. and our hearts are under the holy and awful Eye of God, which doth indeed over-awe our ſouls, *Gen.* 17. 1. O what ſweet ſigns of a recovering ſoul are theſe! Surely ſuch are in the skilful hand of the great Phyſician, who will perfect what yet remains to be done.

Second Uſe for Direction.

Uſe 2. In the laſt place, this point yields us matter of advice and direction to poor ſouls that are under the diſeaſe of ſin, and they are of two ſorts, which I will diſtinctly ſpeak to, *viz.* Firſt, Such as are under their firſt ſickneſs, or ſpiritual ſorrow for ſin, and know not what courſe to take: or, Secondly, ſuch as have been longer in the hands of Chriſt the Phyſician, but are troubled to ſee the cure advance ſo ſlowly upon them, and fear the iſſue.

Firſt,

First, As to those that are in their first troubles for sin, and know not what course to take for ease and safety; I would address to them these following Counsels. 1.

First, Shut your Ears against the dangerous counsels of carnal persons or relations; for as they themselves are unacquainted with these troubles: so also are they with all proper remedies; and it is very usual with the Devil to convey his temptations to distressed souls by such hands; because by them he can do it with least suspicion. It was *Augustins* complaint, that his own Father took little care for his soul; and many Parents act in this case, as if they were imployed by Satan.

Secondly, Be not too eager to get out of trouble, but be content to take Gods way, and wait his time: no woman that is wise, would desire to have her travail hastned one day before the due time: nor will it be your interest to hasten too soon out of trouble. 'Tis true, times of trouble are apt to seem tedious; but a false peace will endanger you more than a long trouble: a man may lengthen his own troubles to the loss of his own peace, and he may shorten them to the hazard of his own soul.

Thirdly, Open your case to wise, judicious and experienced Christians, and especially the Ministers of Christ, whose office it is to counsel and direct you in these difficulties; and let not your troubles lye like a secret smothering fire, always in your own breasts. I know men are more ashamed to open their sins under convictions, than they were to commit them before conviction: but this is your interest, and the true way to your rest and peace. If there be with, or near you an Interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew you your righteousness, and remedy, as it lies in Christ; neglect not your own souls in a sinful concealment of your case: it will be the joy of their hearts to be imployed in such work as this is.

Fourthly, Be much with God in secret: open your hearts to him, and pour out your complaints into his Bosome. The 102. *Psalm* bears a title very suitable to your case and duty: yea, you will find if your troubles work kindly, and God intend a cure upon your souls, that nothing will be able

able to keep God and your ſouls aſunder: whatever your incumbrances in the world be, ſome time will be daily redeemed to be ſo ſpent betwixt you and God.

Fifthly, Plead hard with God in prayer for help and healing: *Heal my ſoul* (ſaith *David*) *for I have ſinned againſt thee*, Pſal. 41. 4. tell him, Chriſt hath his Commiſſion ſealed for ſuch as you are: he was ſent *to bind up the broken hearted*, Iſai. 61. 1. tell him he came into the world to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt, and ſo are you now in your own account and apprehenſion. Lord, what profit is there in my bood? Wilt thou purſue a dried leaf? And why is my heart wounded with the ſenſe of ſin, and mine eyes opened to ſee my danger and miſery, are not theſe the firſt dawnings of mercy upon ſinners? O let it appear, that the time of mercy, even the ſet time is now come.

Sixthly, Underſtand your peace to be in Chriſt only, and faith to be the only way to Chriſt and reſt: let the great enquiry of your ſouls be after Chriſt and faith, ſtudy the nature and neceſſity of theſe, and cry to God day and night for ſtrength to carry you to Chriſt in the way of faith.

2. *Secondly*, As to thoſe that have been longer under the hands of Chriſt, and yet are in troubles ſtill, and cannot attain peace, but their wounds bleed ſtill, and all they hear in Sermons, or do in way of duty, will not bring them to reſt: to ſuch I only add two or three words for a cloſe.

Firſt, Conſider whether you ever rightly cloſed with Chriſt ſince your firſt awakening, and whether theſe be not ſome way of ſin in which you ſtill live: if ſo, no wonder your wounds are kept open, and your ſouls are ſtrangers to peace.

Secondly, If you be conſcious of no ſuch flaw in the foundation, conſider how much of this trouble may ariſe from your conſtitution and natural temper, which being melancholy, will be doubtful and ſuſpicious: you may find it ſo in other caſes of leſs moment, and be ſure Satan will not be wanting to improve it.

Thirdly, Acquaint your ſelves more with the nature of true juſtifying faith; a miſtake in that hath prolonged the troubles

troubles of many: if you look for it in no other act but assurance, you may easily overlook it, as it lies in the mean time in your affiance or acceptance. A true and proper conception of saving faith would go far in the cure of many troubled souls.

Fourthly, Be more careful to shun sin, than to get your selves clear of trouble. 'Tis sad to walk in darkness, but worse to lye under guilt. Say, Lord, I would rather be grieved my self, than be a grief to thy Spirit. O keep me from sin, how long soever thou keep me under sorrow. Wait on God in the way of faith, and in a tender spirit towards sin, and thy wounds shall be healed at last by thy great Physician.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

The

The Eleventh SERMON.

Sermon 11.

LUKE 1. 72.

To perform the mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant.

Text. Containing the second motive to enforce the general exhortation, from a second Title of Christ.

THis Scripture is part of *Zechariahs* Prophecy at the rising of that bright Star, *John*, the *Harbinger* and forerunner of Christ: they are some of the first words he spake after God had loosed his tongue, which for a time was struck dumb for his unbelief. His tongue is now unbound, and at liberty to proclaim to all the world the riches of mercy through Jesus Christ, in a song of praise. Wherein note,

The Mercy celebrated, *viz.* Redemption by Christ, *vers.* 68.

The description of Christ by place and property, *vers.* 69.

The faithfulness of God in our Redemption this way, *vers.* 70.

The benefit of being so Redeemed by Christ, *vers.* 71.

The exact accomplishment of all the promises made to the *Fathers*, in sending Christ, the mercy promised, into the

the world, verſ. 72. *To perform the mercy promiſed to our Fathers*, &c. In theſe words we find two parts,

viz. { 1. A mercy freely promiſed.
2. The promiſed mercy faithfully performed.

Firſt, You have here a mercy freely promiſed, *viz.* by God the Father from the beginning of the world, and often repeated and confirmed in ſeveral ſucceeding ages to the *Fathers*, in his Covenant tranſactions. 1.

This Mercy is *Jeſus Chriſt*, of whom he ſpeaks in this Prophecie: the ſame which he ſtiles *an horn of ſalvation in the houſe of David*, verſ. 69.

The mercy of God in Scripture is put either for,

{ 1. His free favour to the Creature,
or,
2. The effects and fruits of that favour.

'Tis put for the free and undeſerved favour of God to the creature, and this favour of God may reſpect the creature two wayes, either as *undeſerving*, or as *ill deſerving*.

It reſpected innocent man as *undeſerving*, for *Adam* could put no obligation upon his Benefactor: it reſpecteth fallen man as *ill deſerving*. Innocent man could not merit favour, and fallen man did merit wrath: the favour or mercy of God to both is every way free; and that is the firſt acceptation of the word mercy: but then it is alſo taken for the effects and fruits of Gods favour; and they are,

Either, { 1. Principal and primary,
or,
2. Subordinate and Secundary.

Of Secundary and Subordinate Mercies, there are multitudes, both Temporal, reſpecting the body, and Spiritual, reſpecting the ſoul: but the Principal and Primary Mercy is but one, and that is Chriſt, the firſt-born of mercy; the capital mercy; the comprehenſive root-mercy, from whom

are all other mercies; and therefore called by a singular *emphasis* in my Text *The Mercy*, (*i. e.*) the mercy of all mercies; without whom no drop of saving mercy can flow to any of the sons of men; and in whom are all the tender bowels of Divine mercy yearning upon poor sinners. *The Mercy*, and *the mercy promised*. The first promise of Christ was made to *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. 15. and was frequently renewed afterwards to *Abraham*, to *David*; and as the Text speaks, unto the Fathers, in their respective generations.

2. Secondly, We find here also, *the promised mercy faithfully performed. To perform the mercy promised.* What mercy soever the love of God engageth him to promise, the faithfulness of God stands engaged for the performance thereof. Christ the promised mercy, is not only performed truly, but he is also performed according to the promise in all the circumstances thereof exactly. So he was promised to the Fathers, and just so performed to us their Children: hence the Note is:

DOCT.

Doct. *That Jesus Christ the Mercy of mercies, was graciously promised, and faithfully performed by God to his people.*

Three things are here to be opened.

First, Why Christ is stiled *the Mercy*.

Secondly, What kind of Mercy Christ is to his people.

Thirdly, How this promised Mercy was performed.

1. First, Christ is the mercy, *emphatically* so called, the peerless, invaluable, and matchless mercy; because he is the prime fruit of the mercy of God to Sinners. The mercies of God are infinite: mercy gave the world and us our beings: all our protections, provisions and comforts in this world are the fruits of mercy: the after-births of Divine Favour: but Christ is the first-born from the womb of mercy: all other mercies compared with him, are but fruits from that root, and streams from that fountain of mercy: the very bowels of Divine mercy are in Christ, as in *vers.* 78. according to the tender mercies, or as the *Greek*, the yearning bowels of the mercy of God.

Secondly,

Secondly, Chriſt is *the mercy*, becauſe all the mercy of God to ſinners is diſpenſed and conveyed through Chriſt to them, *Joh.* 1. 16. *Col.* 2. 3. *Eph.* 4. 7. Chriſt is the *medium* of all Divine communications: the *Channel* of Grace; through him is both the *decurſus & recurſus gratiarum*; the flows of mercy from God to us, and the returns of praiſe from us to God: fond and vain therefore are all the expectations of mercy out of Chriſt: no drop of ſaving mercy runs beſide this Channel. 2.

Thirdly, Chriſt is *the mercy*, becauſe all inferiour mercies derive both their *nature*, *value*, *ſweetneſs* and *duration* from Chriſt, the fountain mercy of all other mercies. 3.

Firſt, they derive their *nature* from Chriſt: for out of him thoſe things which men call mercies, are rather traps and ſnares, than mercies to them, *Prov.* 1. 32. The time will come when the *rich* that are Chriſtleſs will wiſh, O that we had been poor! and *Nobles* that are not ennobled by the new birth, O that we had been among the lower rank of men! All theſe things that paſs for valuable mercies, like *Ciphers* ſignifie much when ſuch a ſpeaking Figure as Chriſt ſtands before them, elſe they ſignifie nothing to any mans comfort or benefit.

Secondly, They derive their *value* as well as nature from Chriſt: for how little, I pray you, doth it ſignifie to any man to be rich, honourable, politick, and ſucceſsfull in all his deſigns in the world; if after all, he muſt lye down in Hell?

Thirdly, All other mercies derive their *ſweetneſs* from Chriſt, and are but inſipid things without him. There is a twofold ſweetneſs in things; one *natural*, another *ſpiritual*: thoſe that are out of Chriſt can reliſh the firſt, Believers only reliſh both: they have the natural ſweetneſs that is in the mercy it ſelf, and a ſweetneſs ſupernatural from Chriſt and the Covenant, the way in which they receive them. Hence it is that ſome men taſte more ſpiritual ſweetneſs in their *daily bread*, than others do in the *Lords Supper*: one and the ſame mercy by this means becomes a feaſt to ſoul and body at once.

Fourthly, All mercies have their *duration* and perpetuity from Chriſt: all Chriſtleſs perſons hold their mercies upon

the greateſt contingencies and terms of uncertainty: if they be continued during this life, that's all: there is not a drop of mercy after death; but the mercies of the Saints are continued to eternity: the end of their mercies on earth, is the beginning of their better mercies in Heaven. There is a twofold end of mercies, one *perfective*, another *deſtructive*: the death of the Saints perfects and compleats their mercies; the death of the wicked deſtroys and cuts off their mercies: for theſe reaſons Chriſt is called *the mercy*.

2. Secondly, In the next place let us enquire what manner of mercy Chriſt is; and we ſhall find many lovely, and tranſcendent properties to commend him to our ſouls.

Firſt, He is a *free* and undeſerved mercy, called upon that account *the gift of God*, John 4. 10. And to ſhew how free this gift was, God gave him to us when we were enemies, *Rom.* 5. 8. needs muſt that mercy be free, which is given not only to the undeſerving, but to the ill deſerving: the benevolence of God was the ſole impulſive cauſe of this gift, *John* 3. 16.

Secondly, Chriſt is a *full* mercy repleniſhed with all that anſwers to the *wiſhes* or *wants* of ſinners: in him alone is found whatever the juſtice of an angry God requires for ſatisfaction, or the neceſſities of ſouls require for their ſupply. Chriſt is full of mercy, both *extenſively* and *intenſively*; in him are all kinds and ſorts of mercies, and in him are the higheſt and moſt perfect degrees of mercy; *for it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell*, Col. 1. 19.

Thirdly, Chriſt is the *ſeaſonable* mercy, given by the Father to us in due time, *Rom.* 5. 6. in the fulneſs of time, *Gal.* 4. 4. a ſeaſonable mercy in his *exhibition* to the world in *general*, and a ſeaſonable mercy in his *application* to the ſoul in *particular*: the wiſdom of God pitched upon the beſt time for his incarnation, and it hits the very nick of time, for his application. When a poor ſoul is diſtreſſed, loſt, at its wits end, ready to periſh; then comes Chriſt: all Gods works are done in ſeaſon, but none more ſeaſonable than this great work of Salvation by Chriſt.

Fourthly, Chriſt is the *neceſſary mercy*: there is an abſolute neceſſity of Jeſus Chriſt: hence in Scripture he is called the *bread of life*, Joh. 6. 48. he is bread to the hungry: he is the

the *water of life*, Joh. 7. 37. as cold water to the thirsty soul: he is a ransome for captives, *Mat.* 20. 28. a garment to the naked, *Rom.* 13. *ult.* only bread is not so necessary to the hungry, nor water to the thirsty, nor a ransom to the Captive, nor a garment to the naked; as Christ is to the soul of a sinner, the breath of our nostrills, the life of our souls is in Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, Christ is a *fountain mercy*, and all other mercies flow from him: a believer may say of Christ, *all my fresh springs are in thee*: from his merit, and from his Spirit flow our Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Peace, Joy in the Holy Ghost, and blessedness in the world to come: *In that day shall there be a fountain opened*, Zech. 13. 1.

Sixthly, Christ is a *satisfying mercy*; he that is full of Christ can feel the want of nothing. *I desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. Christ bounds and terminates the vast desires of the soul; he is the very Sabbath of the soul: how hungry, empty, straitned, and pinched in upon every side, is the soul of man in the abundance and fulness of all outward things, till it come to Christ? The weary motions of a restless soul, like those of a River, cannot be at rest till they pour themselves into Christ, the Ocean of blessedness.

Seventhly, Christ is a *peculiar mercy* intended for, and applied to a remnant among men: some would extend redemption as large as the world, but the Gospel limits it to those only that believe: and these Believers are upon that account called a *peculiar people*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The offers of Christ indeed are large, and general; but the application of Christ is but to few, *Isai.* 53. 1. the greater cause have they to whom Christ comes, to lye with their mouths in the dust, astonished and overwhelmed with the sense of so peculiar and distinguishing mercy.

Eighthly, Jesus Christ is a *suitable mercy*, fitted in all respects to our needs and wants, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20. wherein the admirable wisdom of God is illustriously displaied: *ye are complete in him* (saith the Apostle) *Col.* 2. 20. Are we enemies? He is *reconciliation*: are we sold to sin and Satan? He is *redemption*: are we condemned by Law? He is *the Lord our righteousness*: hath sin polluted us? He is a *fountain*

tain opened for ſin and for uncleaneſs: are we loſt by departing from God? He is *the way* to the Father. Reſt is not ſo ſuitable to the weary, nor bread to the hungry, as Chriſt is to the ſenſible ſinner.

Ninthly, Chriſt is an *aſtoniſhing and wonderful mercy:* his name is called *Wonderful, Iſai.* 9. 6. and as his name is, ſo is he; a wonderful Chriſt: his perſon is a wonder, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh:* his abaſement wonderful, *Phil.* 2. 6. his love is a wonderful love: his redemption full of wonders: Angels deſire to look into it: he is and will be admired by Angels and Saints to all eternity.

Tenthly, Jeſus Chriſt is *an incomparable and matchleſs mercy; as the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood, ſo is my Beloved among the Sons* (ſaith the enamoured Spouſe) *Cant.* 2. 3. Draw the compariſon how you will betwixt Chriſt and all other enjoyments, you will find none in Heaven or earth to match him: he is more than all *externals*, as the light of the *Sun* is more than that of a *Candle*: nay the worſt of Chriſt is better than the beſt of the world: his reproaches are better than the worlds pleaſures, *Heb.* 11. 25. he is more than all *Spirituals*, as the *Fountain* is more than the *Streams:* he is more than juſtification, as the *cauſe* is more than the *effect:* more than ſanctification, as the *perſon* himſelf is more than his image or *picture:* he is more than all peace, all comfort, all joys, as the *Tree* is more than the *Fruit*. Nay draw the compariſon betwixt Chriſt and things eternal, and you will find him better than they: for what is Heaven without Chriſt? Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* If Chriſt ſhould ſay to the Saints, Take Heaven among you, but as for me, I will withdraw my ſelf from you: the Saints would fall a weeping, even in Heaven it ſelf, and ſay, Lord, Heaven will be no more Heaven to us, except thou be there; thou art the better half of Heaven.

Eleventhly, Chriſt is an *unſearchable mercy:* who can ſpell his wonderful name, *Prov.* 30. 4. who can tell over his *unſearchable riches*, Eph. 3. 8. Hence it is that ſouls never tire in the ſtudy or love of Chriſt, becauſe new wonders are eternally riſing out of him: he is a deep which no line of any created underſtanding, angelical or humane can fathom.

Twelfthly,

Twelfthly, and Laſtly, Chriſt is an *everlaſting mercy*; *the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13.8. All other enjoyments are periſhable, time-eaten things: time like a Moth will fret them out: but the riches of Chriſt are durable riches, *Prov.* 8. 18. the graces of Chriſt are durable graces, *Joh.* 4. 14. all the creatures are flowers that appear and fade in their month: but this Roſe of *Sharon*, this Lilly of the Valley, never withers. Thus you ſee the mercy performed, with his deſirable properties.

Thirdly, The laſt thing to be opened is the manner of Gods performing this mercy to his people: which the Lord did, 3.

1. Really and truly, as he had promiſed him.
2. Exactly agreeable to the promiſes and predictions of him.

Firſt, Really and truly; as he had promiſed, ſo he made good the promiſe, Act. 2. 36. *Let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made the ſame Jeſus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.*

The manifeſtation of Chriſt in the fleſh was no phantaſm or deluſion, but a moſt evident and palpable truth, 1 Joh. 1. 1. *That which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled.* A truth ſo certain, that the aſſertors of it appealed to the very enemies of Chriſt for the certainty thereof, *Act.* 2. 22. yea, not only the ſacred but prophane writers witneſs to it: not only the *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*, but even the Heathen writers of thoſe times, both *Roman* and *Jewiſh*, as *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Plinius* the younger, and *Joſephus* the Jewiſh *Antiquary* do all acknowledge it.

Secondly, As God did really and truly perform Chriſt the promiſed mercy, ſo he performed this promiſed mercy exactly agreeable to the promiſes, types, and predictions made of him to the Fathers, even to the moſt minute circumſtances thereof. This is a great truth for our faith to be eſtabliſhed in: let us therefore caſt our eyes both upon the *promiſes* and *performances* of God, with reſpect to Chriſt the mercy of mercies. See how he was repreſented to the Fathers

thers long before his manifestation in the flesh: and what an one he appeared to be when he was really exhibited in the flesh.

First, As to his person and qualifications, as it was *foretold*, so it was *fulfilled*. His original was said to be unsearchable and eternal, *Mica.* 5. 2. and so he affirmed himself to be, Rev. 1. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:* Joh. 6. 31, 32. *Before Abraham was, I am:* his two natures united in one person was plainly foretold, Zech. 13. 7. *the man my fellow*; and such a one God performed, *Rom.* 9. 5. His immaculate purity and holiness was foretold, Dan. 9. 24. *to anoint the most Holy*; some render it *the great Saint:* the Prince of Saints, and such an one he was indeed, when he lived in this world: Joh. 8. 46. *Which of you convinceth me of sin?* His Offices were foretold, the prophetical Office predicted, *Deut.* 18. 15. and fulfilled in him, *Joh.* 1. 18. his Priestly Office foretold, *Psal.* 110. 4. fulfilled, *Heb.* 9. 14. his Kingly Office foretold, *Mica.* 5. 2. and in him fulfilled, his very enemies being Judges, *Mat.* 27. 37.

Secondly, As to his birth, the time, place, and manner thereof was foretold to the Fathers, and exactly performed to a tittle.

First, The time prefixed more generally in *Jacobs Phophecie*, *Gen.* 44. 10. when the Scepter should depart from *Judah*, as indeed it did in *Herod* the *Idumean:* more particularly in *Daniel* seventy weeks from the decree of *Darius*, *Dan.* 9. 24. answering exactly to the time of his birth: so cogent and full a proof, that *Porphyry*, the great enemy of Christians had no other evasion, but that this Prophecie was devised after the event; which yet the Jews (as bitter enemies to Christ as himself) will by no means allow to be true: and Lastly, The time of his birth was exactly pointed at in *Haggai*'s Prophecie, *Hag.* 2. 7, 9. compared with *Mal.* 3. 1. he must come whilst the second Temple stood: at that time was a general expectation of him, *Joh.* 1. 19. and at that very time he came, *Luke* 2. 38.

Secondly, The place of his birth was foretold to be *Bethlehem Ephrata*, *Mica.* 5. 2. and so it was, *Mat.* 2. 5, 6. to be brought up in *Nazareth*, Zech. 6. 12. *Behold the man whose name is the branch*, the word is *Netzer*, whence is the word

word *Nazarite:* and there indeed was our Lord brought up, *Mat.* 2. 23.

Thirdly, His Parent was to be a *Virgin*, *Iſai.* 7. 14. punctually fulfilled, *Mat.* 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Fourthly, His Stock or Tribe was foretold to be *Judah*, *Gen.* 49. 10. and it is evident (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that our Lord ſprang out of Judah*, Heb. 7. 14.

Fifthly, His *Harbinger* or forerunner was foretold, *Mal.* 4. 5, 6. fulfilled in *John the Baptiſt*, *Luk.* 1. 16, 17.

Sixthly, The obſcurity and meanneſs of his birth was predicted, *Iſai.* 53. 2. *Zech.* 9. 9. to which the event anſwered, *Luk.* 2. 12.

Thirdly, His Doctrine and Miracles were foretold, *Iſai.* 61. 1, 2. and *Iſai.* 35. 4, 5. the accompliſhment whereof in Chriſt is evident in the Hiſtory of all the *Evangeliſts.*

Fourthly, His death for us was foretold by the Prophets, Dan. 9. 26. *The Meſſiah ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf:* Iſai. 53. 5. *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions:* and ſo he was, *Joh.* 11. 50. The very kind and manner of his death was prefigured in the brazen Serpent, his Type, and anſwered in his death upon the Croſs, *Joh.* 3. 14.

Fifthly, His burial in the *Tomb* of a rich man was foretold, *Iſai.* 53. 9. and accompliſhed moſt exactly, *Mat.* 27. 59, 60.

Sixthly, His reſurrection from the dead was Typed out in *Jona*, and fulfilled in Chriſts abode three days and nights in the Grave, *Mat.* 12. 39.

Seventhly, The wonderful ſpreading of the Goſpel in the world, even to the Iſles of the *Gentiles*, was fore-propheſied, *Iſai.* 49. 6. To the truth whereof we are not only the witneſſes, but the happy inſtances, and examples of it. Thus the promiſed mercy was performed.

Inference 1.

If Chriſt be the mercy of mercies; the medium of conveying all other mercies from God to men: Then in vain do men expect and hope for the mercy of God out of Jeſus Chriſt. *Inference* 1.

I know many poor ſinners comfort themſelves with this, when they come upon a bed of ſickneſs, I am ſinful, but

God is merciful: and it is very true, God is merciful; plenteous in mercy; his mercy is great above the heavens; mercy pleaseth him: and all this they that are in Christ shall find experimentally to their comfort and salvation: but what is all this to thee, if thou beest Christless? There is not one drop of saving mercy that comes in any other Chanel than Christ to the soul of any man.

But must I then expect no mercy out of Christ? This is a hard case, very uncomfortable doctrine. Yes, thou maist be a Christless and Covenantless soul, and yet have variety of temporal mercies as *Ishmael* had, *Gen.* 17. 20, 21. God may give thee the fatness of the Earth, Riches, Honours, Pleasures, a numerous and prosperous Posterity; will that content thee? Yes, if I may have Heaven too: no, no, neither Heaven nor Pardon, nor any other Spiritual or Eternal mercy may be expected out of Christ, *Jude vers.* 21. O deceive not your selves in this point. There are two bars betwixt you and all Spiritual mercies, *viz.* the guilt of sin, and the filth of sin: and nothing but your own union with Christ can remove these, and so open the passage for Spiritual mercies to your souls.

Why, but I will repent of sin, strive to obey the Commands of God, make restitutions for the wrongs I have done, cry to God for mercy, bind my soul with vows and strong resolutions against sin for time to come: will not all this lay a ground work for hope of mercy to my soul? No, no, this will not, this cannot do it.

First, All your *sorrows*, tears and mournings for sin cannot obtain mercy: could you shed as many tears for any one sin that ever you committed, as all the children of *Adam* have shed upon any account whatsoever since the creation of the World; they will not purchase the pardon of that one sin: for the Law accepts no short payment, it requires plenary satisfaction, and will not discharge any soul without it: nor can it acknowledge or own your sorrows to be such: the repentance of a soul in Christ finds through him acceptance with God, but out of him it's nothing.

Secondly, All your *strivings* to obey the Commands of God, and live more strictly for time to come, will not obtain mercy, Mat. 5. 20. *Except your righteousness shall exceed*

the

the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Thirdly, Your *reſtitution* and reparation of wrongs you have done cannot obtain mercy: *Judas* reſtored, and yet was damned: man is repaired, but God is not: remiſſion is the act of God; 'tis he muſt looſe your Conſciences from the bond of guilt, or they can never be looſed.

Fourthly, All your *cryes* to God for mercy will not prevail for mercy, if you be out of Chriſt, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Job* 27. 9. A righteous Judge will not reverſe the juſt ſentence of the Law, though the Priſoner at the Bar fall upon his knees, and cry, mercy, mercy.

Fifthly, Your *vows* and engagements to God for time to come cannot obtain mercy: for they being made in your own ſtrength, 'tis impoſſible you ſhould keep them; and if you could, yet it is impoſſible they ſhould obtain remiſſion and mercy: ſhould you never ſin more for time to come, yet how ſhall God be ſatisfied for ſins paſt? Juſtice muſt have ſatisfaction, or you can never have remiſſion, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. and no work wrought by man can ſatisfie Divine Juſtice, nor is the ſatisfaction of Chriſt made over to any for their diſcharge, but to ſuch only as are in him: therefore never expect mercy out of Chriſt.

Inference 2.

Is Chriſt the mercy of mercies, greater, better and more neceſſary than all other mercies, then let no inferiour mercy ſatisfie you for your portion. *Inference* 2.

God hath mercies of all ſorts to give; but Chriſt is the chief, the prime mercy of all mercies: O be not ſatisfied without that mercy. When *Luther* had a rich preſent ſent him, he proteſted God ſhould not put him off ſo: and *David* was of the ſame mind, *Pſal.* 17. 14. If the Lord ſhould give any of you the deſires of your hearts in the good things of this life, let not that ſatisfie you whilſt you are Chriſtleſs. For,

Valdè proteſtatus ſum, me nolle ſic ab eo ſatiari, Luth.

Firſt, What is there in theſe earthly enjoyments, whereof the vileſt of men have not a greater fulneſs than you? *Job* 21. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Pſal.* 17. 10. *Pſal.* 73. 3, 12.

Secondly, What comfort can all these things give to a soul already condemned as thou art? *Joh.* 3. 18.

Thirdly, What sweetness can be in them, whilst they are all unsanctified things to you? Enjoyments and their sanctification are two distinct things, *Psal.* 37. 16. *Prov.* 10. 22. Thousands of unsanctified enjoyments will not yield your souls one drop of solid spiritual comfort.

Fourthly, What pleasure can you take in these things out of which death must shortly strip you naked? You must die, you must dye; and whose then shall all those things be for which you have laboured? Be not so fond to think of leaving a great name behind you: 'tis but a poor felicity (as *Chrysostom* well observes) to be tormented where thou art, and praised where thou art not: the sweeter your portion hath been on earth, the more intolerable will your condition be in Hell: yea, these earthly delights do not only encrease the torments of the damned, but also prepare (as they are instruments of sin) the souls of men for damnation, Prov. 1. 32. *Surely the prosperity of fools shall destroy them:* be restless therefore, till Christ the mercy of mercies be the root and fountain, yielding and sanctifying all other mercies to you.

Tunc edax flamma comburet, quos nunc carnalis delectatio pollut.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. Is Jesus Christ the mercy of mercies, infinitely better than all other mercies; *then let all that be in Christ be content and well satisfied, whatever other inferiour mercies the wisdom of God seems fit to deny them:* you have a *Benjamins* portion, a plentiful inheritance in Christ, will you yet grumble? Others have Houses splendid and magnificent upon earth, but you have *an house made without hands, eternal in the Heavens,* 2 Cor. 5. 1. Others are cloathed with rich and costly apparel, your souls are cloathed with the white pure robes of Christs righteousness, Isai. 61. 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyfull in my God; for he hath cloathed me with the garment of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with Jewels.* Let those that have full Tables, heavy Purses, rich Lands, but no Christ;

Chriſt; be rather objects of your pity than envy: 'tis better like ſtore-cattle to be kept lean and hungry, than with the fatted Ox to tumble in flowry Meadows, thence to be led away to the *ſhambles*. God hath not a better mercy to give than Chriſt thy portion, in him all neceſſary mercies are ſecured to thee, and thy wants and ſtraits ſanctified to thy good. O therefore never open thy mouth to complain againſt thy bountiful God.

Inference 4.

Is Chriſt *the mercy (i. e.)* he in whom all the tender mercies of God towards poor ſinners are, *then let none be diſcouraged in going to Chriſt by reaſon of the ſin and unworthineſs that is in them:* his very name is *mercy*, and as his name is ſo is he. Poor drooping ſinner, incourage thy ſelf in the way of faith, the Chriſt to whom thou art going is mercy it ſelf to broken-hearted ſinners moving towards him in the way of faith: Doubt not that mercy will repulſe thee, 'tis againſt both its name and nature ſo to do. Jeſus Chriſt is ſo merciful to poor ſouls that come to him, that he hath received and pardoned the chiefeſt of ſinners; men that ſtood as remote from mercy as any in the world, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. Thoſe that ſhed the blood of Chriſt, have yet been waſhed in that blood from their ſin, *Act.* 2. 36, 37. Mercy receives ſinners without exception of great and heinous ones, Joh. 7. 37. *If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink.* Goſpel invitations run in general terms to all ſinners that are heavy laden, *Mat.* 11. 28. When Mr. *Billney* the *Martyr* heard a Miniſter preaching at this rate, O thou old Sinner who haſt been ſerving the Devil theſe fifty or ſixty years; doſt thou think that Chriſt will receive thee now? O ſaid he, what a preaching of Chriſt is here? Had Chriſt been thus preached to me in the day of my trouble for ſin, what had become of me! But bleſſed be God there is a ſufficiency both of merit and mercy in Jeſus Chriſt for all ſinners, for the vileſt among ſinners, whoſe hearts ſhall be made willing to come unto him. So merciful is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that he moves firſt, *Iſai.* 65. 1, 2. So merciful that he upbraids none, *Ezec.* 18. 22. So merciful that he will not deſpiſe the weakeſt

weakest if sincere desires of souls, *Isai.* 42. 3. So merciful, that nothing more grieves him, than our unwillingness to come unto him for mercy, *Joh.* 5. 40. So merciful that he waiteth to the last upon sinners to shew them mercy, *Rom.* 10. 21. *Mat.* 23. 37. In a word, so merciful, that it is his greatest joy when sinners come unto him that he may shew them mercy, *Luk.* 15. 5. 22.

Object. But yet it cannot enter into my thoughts that I should obtain mercy.

Sol. First, You measure God by your selves, 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Man will not, but the merciful God will upon the submission of his enemies to him.

Secondly, You are discouraged because you have not tryed. Go to Jesus Christ, poor distressed sinner, try him; and then report what a Christ thou findest him to be.

Object. But I have neglected the time of mercy, and now it is too late.

Sol. How know you that? Have you seen the Book of Life, or turned over the Records of Eternity? Or do you not unwarrantably intrude into the secrets of God which belong not to you? Besides, if the treaty were at an end, how is it that thy heart is now distressed for sin, and solicitous after deliverance from it?

Object. But I have waited long, and yet see no mercy for me.

Sol. May not mercy be coming, and you not see it? or have you not waited at the wrong dore? If you wait for the mercy of God, through Christ, in the way of humiliation and faith, and continue waiting; assuredly mercy shall come at last.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. Hath God performed the mercy promised to the Fathers, the great mercy, the capital mercy Jesus Christ, *then let no man distrust God for the performance of lesser mercies, contained in any other promises of the Scripture:* the performance of this mercy secures the performance of all other mercies to us. For,

First, Christ is a greater mercy than any other which yet remains to be performed, *Rom.* 8. 32.

Secondly,

Secondly, This mercy virtually comprehends all other mercies, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23.

Thirdly, The promiſes that contain all other mercies are ratified and confirmed to Believers in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20.

Fourthly, It was much more improbable that God would beſtow his own Son upon the world, than that he ſhould beſtow any other mercy upon it. Wait therefore in a comfortable expectation of the fulfilling of all the reſt of the promiſes in their ſeaſons: hath he given thee Chriſt, he will give thee bread to eat, rayment to put on, ſupport in troubles, and whatſoever elſe thy ſoul or body ſtands in need of: the bleſſings contained in all other promiſes are fully ſecured by the performance of this great promiſe: thy pardon, peace, acceptance with God now, and enjoyment of him for ever, ſhall be fulfilled: the great mercy Chriſt, makes way for all other mercies to the ſouls of Believers.

Inference 6.

Laſtly, *How mad are they that part with Chriſt, the beſt of mercies, to ſecure and preſerve any temporal, leſſer mercies to themſelves!* Thus *Demas* and *Judas* gave up Chriſt to gain a little of the world: O ſoul-undoing bargain! How dear do they pay for the world, that purchaſe it with the loſs of Chriſt, and their own peace for ever! *Inference* 6.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt the mercy of mercies.

The

The Twelfth SERMON.

Sermon 12.

Text. Containing a third motive to enliven the general exhortation, from a third title of Christ.

CANT. 5. part of verse 16.

——yea, he is altogether lovely.

AT the ninth verse of this Chapter you have a query propounded to the *Sponse*, by the *Daughters* of *Jerusalem*, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* To this question the Spouse returns her answer in the following verses, wherein she asserts his excellency in general, vers. 10. *He is the chiefest among ten thousands:* confirms that general assertion by an enumeration of his particular excellencies to vers. 16. where she closes up her *Character* and *Encomium* of her Beloved, with an elegant *Epiphonema*, in the words that I have read, *Yea, he is altogether lovely.*

The words, you see, are an affirmative proposition, setting forth the transcendent loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and naturally resolve themselves into three parts, *viz.*

1. The Subject.
2. The Predicate.
3. The manner of Predication.

First,

First, The *subject*, *He*, *viz.* the Lord Jesus Christ, after whom she had been seeking: for whom she was sick of love: concerning whom these Daughters of *Jerusalem* had enquired: whom she had endeavoured so *graphically* to describe in his particular excellencies. This is the great and excellent *Subject* of whom she here speaks. 1.

Secondly, The *predicate*, or what she affirmeth or saith of him, *viz.* that he is a *lovely one*, *machamaddim*, desires, according to the import of the original which signifies earnestly to desire, covet or long for that which is most pleasant, grateful, delectable and amiable; the original word is both in the *abstract*, and of the *plural number*, which speaks Christ to be the very essence of all delights and pleasures, the very soul and substance of them. As all the Rivers be gathered into the Ocean, which is the congregation or meeting-place of all the waters in the world: so Christ is that Ocean in which all true delights and pleasures meet. 2.

Significat appetere, expetere quod jucundum, gratum, voluptuosum, utile & amabile est. Pagn.

Thirdly, *The manner of predication*, He is [*altogether*] lovely, *totus*, *totus desiderabilis*, lovely in all and in every part, as if she had said, Look on him in what respect or particular you will, cast your eye upon this lovely object and view him any way, turn him in your serious thoughts which way you will; consider his Person, his Offices, his Works, or any thing belonging to him, you shall find him *altogether lovely*: there is nothing ungrateful in him, there is nothing lovely without him. 3.

Hence note,

DOCT.

That Jesus Christ is the loveliest person souls can set their eyes upon: Psal. 45. 2. *Thou art fairer than the children of men.* That is said of Jesus Christ, which cannot be said of any creature, that he is *altogether lovely*. In opening this lovely point, I shall, *Doct.*

1. Weigh the importance of this phrase, *altogether lovely*.
2. Shew you in what respects Christ is so.

1. First, Let us weigh this excellent expression, and particularly consider, what is involved in it, and you shall find this expression, *Altogether lovely:*

Nihil in eo quod non est amabile.

First, That it excludes all unloveliness, and distastefulness from Jesus Christ. So *Vatablus*, there is nothing in him which is not amiable: the excellencies of Christ are perfectly exclusive of all their opposites: there is nothing of a contrary nature or quality found in him to allay or debase his excellency: and in this respect Christ infinitely transcends the most excellent and loveliest creatures: for whatsoever loveliness is found in them it is not without a distasteful tang: the fairest Pictures must have their *shadows:* the most orient and transplendent Stones must have their *foiles* to set off their beauty: the best creature is but a bitter-sweet at best: if there be somewhat pleasing, there is also somewhat distasting: if there be gracious and natural excellencies in the same person to delight us, yet there is also some natural corruption intermixed with it to distaste us: but it is not so in our altogether lovely Christ: his excellencies are pure and unmixed, he is a Sea of Sweetness, without one drop of Gall.

Quantus quantus est, summis studiis & votis est expetendus, Brightman.

Secondly, *Altogether lovely* (*i. e.*) as there is nothing unlovely found in him, so all that is in him is wholly lovely: as every raye of Gold is precious, so every thing that is in Christ is precious: who can weigh Christ in a pair of ballances, and tell you what his worth is? His price is above Rubies, and all that thou canst desire is not to be compared with him, *Prov.* 8. 11.

Thirdly, *Altogether lovely*, (*i. e.*) he is comprehensive of all things that are lovely: he seals up the sum of all loveliness: *quæ faciunt divisa beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt*; things that shine as single stars with a particular glory, all meet in Christ as a glorious constellation, Col. 1. 19. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell.* Cast your eyes among all created beings, survey the Universe, observe strength in one, beauty in a second, faithfulness in a third, wisdom in a fourth; but you shall find none excelling in them all as Christ doth. Bread hath one quality, Water another, Rayment another, Physick another, but none hath all in it self as Christ hath: he is bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, a garment to the naked, healing to the wounded,

ed, and whatever a ſoul can deſire is found in him, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30.

Fourthly, *Altogether lovely*, (*i. e.*) nothing is lovely in *oppoſition* to him, or in ſeparation from him; if he be altogether lovely, then whatſoever is oppoſite to, or ſeparate from him, can have no lovelineſs in it: take away Chriſt, and where is the lovelineſs of any enjoyment? The beſt creature comfort out of Chriſt is but a broken Ciſtern, or a Veſſel whoſe bottom is fallen out, it cannot hold one drop of true comfort, *Pſal.* 73. 25. It is with the creature, the ſweeteſt and lovelieſt creature, as with a beautiful image in the Glaſs; turn away the Face, and where is the Image? Riches, Honours, and comfortable Relations are ſweet when the face of Chriſt ſmiles upon us through them, but without him what empty trifles are they all?

Fifthly, *Altogether lovely*, (*i. e.*) tranſcending all created excellencies in beauty and lovelineſs, ſo much it ſpeaks: if you compare Chriſt and other things, be they never ſo lovely, never ſo excellent and deſireable; Chriſt carries away all lovelineſs from them, *he is* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *before all things*, Col. 1. 17. not only before all things in time, nature, and order; but before all things in dignity, glory and true excellency: in all things he muſt have the preeminence: for let us but compare Chriſts excellency with the creatures, in a few particulars, and how evidently will the tranſcendent lovelineſs of Jeſus Chriſt appear! For,

Firſt, All other lovelineſs is *derivative* and ſecondary, but the lovelineſs of Chriſt is *original* and *primary*. Angels and men, the world and all the deſirables in it, receive what excellency they have from him, they are ſtreams from the fountain: but as the waters in the fountain it ſelf are more abundant, ſo more pure and pleaſant than in the ſtreams: and the farther any thing departs and is removed from its fountain and original, the leſs excellency there is in it.

Dulcius ex ipſo fonte bibuntur aquæ.

Secondly, The lovelineſs and excellency of all other things is but *relative* and *reſpective*, conſiſting in its reference to Chriſt, and ſubſerviency to his glory; but Chriſt is lovely conſidered *abſolutely* in himſelf: he is deſireable for himſelf, other things are ſo for him.

Thirdly, The beauty and loveliness of all other things is *fading* and perishing, but the loveliness of Christ is *fresh* to all eternity: the sweetness of the best of creatures is a fading flower, if not before, yet certainly at death it must fade away, Job 4. 21. *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?* Yes, yes, whether natural excellencies of the body, or acquired endowments of the mind, lovely features, amiable qualities, attracting excellencies: all these like pleasant flowers are withered, faded, and destroyed by death: but Christ is still the same, yesterday, to day and for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8.

Fourthly, The beauty and loveliness of creatures is *ensnaring*, and dangerous; a man may make an *Idol* of it, and dote beyond the bounds of moderation upon it: but there is no danger of excess in the love of Christ: the soul is then in the healthiest frame and temper, when it is most sick of love to Christ, *Cant.* 5. 8.

Fifthly, The loveliness of every creature is of a *cloying* and glutting nature: our estimation of it abates, and sinks by our nearer approach to it, or longer enjoyment of it: creatures like Pictures are fairest at a due distance; but it is not so with Christ, the nearer the soul approacheth him, and the longer it lives in the enjoyment of him, still the more sweet and desireable he is.

Sixthly, Lastly, All other loveliness is *unsatisfying*, and straitning to the soul of man: there is not room enough in any one, or in all the creatures for the soul of man to dilate and expatiate it self; but it still feels it self pinch't in, and narrowed within those strait limits: and this comes to pass from the inadequateness and unsuitableness of the creature to the nobler and more excellent soul of man: which like a Ship in a narrow River hath not room to turn, and besides is ever and anon striking ground, and foundring in those shallows: but Jesus Christ is every way adequate to the vast desires of the soul: in him it hath Sea-room enough: there it may spread all its sails, no fear of touching the bottom. And thus you see what is the importance of this phrase, *altogether lovely*.

Æstuat infelix angusto limite mundi.

2. Secondly, Next I promised to shew you in what respects Jesus Christ is altogether lovely. And,

First,

First, *He is altogether lovely in his perſon*; a deity dwelling in fleſh, *Joh.* 1. 14. The wonderful union and perfection of the divine and humane nature in Chriſt renders him an object of admiration and adoration to Angels and men, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. God never preſented to the world ſuch a viſion of glory before: and then conſidering how the humane nature of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is repleniſhed with all the graces of the Spirit, ſo as never any of all the Saints was filled; O how lovely doth this render him! Joh. 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by meaſure unto him:* this makes him fairer than the children of men, grace being poured into his lips, *Pſal.* 45. 2. If a ſmall meaſure of grace in the Saints makes them ſuch ſweet and deſireable companions, what muſt the riches and fulneſs of the Spirit of grace, filling Jeſus Chriſt without meaſure, make him in the eyes of believers? O what a glory and a luſter muſt it ſtamp upon him!

Secondly, *He is altogether lovely in his Offices:* for let us but conſider the ſuitableneſs, fulneſs, and comfortableneſs of them.

Firſt, The *ſuitableneſs* of the Offices of Chriſt to the miſeries and wants of men, and we cannot but adore the infinite wiſdom of God in his inveſtiture with them: we are by nature blind and ignorant, at beſt but groping in the dim light of nature after God: *Acts* 17. 27. Jeſus Chriſt is a light to lighten the Gentiles, *Iſai.* 49. 6. When this great Prophet came into the world, then did the day-ſpring from on high viſit us, *Luk.* 1. 78. The ſtate of nature is a ſtate of alienation and enmity to God; Chriſt comes into the world an attoning ſacrifice, making peace by the blood of his Croſs, *Col.* 1. 20. All the world, by nature, are in bondage and captivity to Satan, a lamentable thraldom: Chriſts comes with a kingly power to reſcue ſinners, as a prey, from the mouth of the terrible one.

Secondly, Let the *fulneſs* of his Offices be alſo conſidered, by reaſon whereof he is able *to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. The three Offices compriſing in them all that our ſouls do need become an univerſal relief to all our wants; and therefore,

Thirdly, Unſpeakably *comfortable* muſt the Offices of Chriſt be to the ſouls of ſinners: if light be pleaſant to our eyes,

eyes, how pleasant is that light of life springing from the Sun of righteousness! *Mal.* 4. 2. If a pardon be sweet to a condemned malefactor, how sweet must the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus be to the trembling Conscience of a law-condemned-sinner? If a rescue from a cruel Tyrant be sweet to a poor Captive; how sweet must it be to the ears of inslaved sinners to hear the voice of liberty and deliverance proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Out of the several Offices of Christ, as out of so many fountains, all the promises of the new Covenant flow; as so many soul refreshing streams of peace and joy: all the promises of illumination, counsel and direction flow out of the *Prophetical Office:* all the promises of reconciliation, peace, pardon, and acceptation flow out of the *Priestly Office*, with the sweet streams of Joy and Spiritual comfort depending thereupon: all the promises of converting, increasing, defending, directing, and supplying grace, flow out of the *Kingly Office* of Christ: indeed all promises may be reduced to the three Offices: so that Jesus Christ must needs be *altogether lovely in his Offices.*

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is *altogether lovely in his relations.*

First, He is a lovely *Redeemer*, *Isai.* 61. 1. he came to open the Prison-dores to them that are bound. Needs must this Redeemer be a lovely one, if we consider *the depth of misery* from which he redeemed us, *even from the wrath to come*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 10. How lovely was *Titus* in the eyes of the poor enthralled *Greeks*, whom he delivered from their bondage! This endeared him to them unto that degree, that when their liberty was proclaimed, they even trode one another to death to see the *Herauld* that proclaimed it; and all the night following with instruments of musick danced about his Tent, crying with united voyces A *Saviour*, a *Saviour*. Or whether we consider the *numbers redeemed*, and the *means* of their redemption, Rev. 5. 9. *And they sang a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* He redeemed us not with Silver and Gold, but with his own precious Blood by way of *price*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. with his out-stretched and glorious arm, by way of *power*, *Col.* 1. 13. he redeemed us freely,

Eph.

Eph. 1. 7. fully, *Rom.* 8. 1. ſeaſonably, *Gal.* 4. 4. and out of ſpecial and peculiar love, *Joh.* 17. 9. In a word, he hath redeemed us for ever, never more to come into bondage, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Joh.* 10. 28. Oh how lovely is Jeſus Chriſt in the relation of a Redeemer to Gods elect!

Secondly, He is a lovely *Bridegroom* to all that he eſpouſes to himſelf: how doth the Church glory in him, in the words following my Text, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye Daughters of Jeruſalem*; (*q. d.*) Heaven and earth cannot ſhow ſuch another: which needs no fuller proof than the following particulars.

Firſt, That he eſpouſeth to himſelf in mercy, and in loving kindneſs, ſuch deformed, defiled, and altogether unworthy ſouls as we are; who have no beauty, no excellency to make us deſirable in his eyes: all the ſprings of his love to us are in his own breaſt, *Deut.* 7. 7. He chooſeth us not becauſe we were, but that he might make us lovely, *Epheſ.* 5. 27. He paſſed by us when we lay in our blood, and ſaid unto us live, and that was the time of love, *Ezec.* 16. 5.

Secondly, He expects nothing with us, and yet beſtows himſelf, and all he hath upon us: our poverty cannot enrich him, but he made himſelf poor to enrich us, 2 *Cor.* 8, 9. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

Thirdly, No Husband loves the Wife of his boſome at the rate Chriſt loved his people, *Eph.* 5. 25. He loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it.

Fourthly, None bears with weakneſſes, and provocations as Chriſt doth, the Church is ſtiled the *Lambs Wife*, *Rev.* 21. 9.

Fifthly, No Husband is ſo immortal and everlaſting a Husband as Chriſt is. Death ſeparates all other relations, but the ſouls union with Chriſt is not diſſolved in the Grave: yea, the day of a Believers death is his marriage-day, the day of his fulleſt enjoyment of Chriſt: no Husband can ſay to his Wife what Chriſt ſaith to the Believer, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. 5.

Sixthly, No Bridegroom advanceth his Bride to ſuch honours by Marriage as Chriſt doth: he relates them to God as their Father; and from that day the mighty and glorious Angels

Angels think it no dishonour to be their servants, *Heb.* 1.14. They are brought in admiring the beauty and glory of the Spouse of Christ, *Rev.* 21.9.

Seventhly, and Lastly, No marriage was ever consummated with that triumphal solemnity, as the marriage of Christ and Believers shall be in Heaven, *Psal.* 45. 14, 15. *She shall be brought to the King in rayment of needle work, the virgins, her companions, that follow her, shall be brought unto thee, with gladness and rejoycing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the Kings Palace.* Among the Jews the marriage house was called *Bethillula*, the house of praise: there was joy upon all hands; but not like the joy that will be in Heaven, when Believers, the Spouse of Christ, shall be brought thither; *God the Father* will rejoyce to behold the blessed accomplishment and consummation of that glorious design and project of his love. *Jesus Christ the Bridegroom* will rejoyce to see the travail of his soul, the blessed birth and issue of all his bitter pangs and agonies, *Isai.* 53. 11. *The holy Spirit* will rejoyce to see the complement and perfection of that sanctifying design which was committed to his hand, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. To see those souls whom he once found as rough stones, now to shine as the bright polished stones of the Spiritual Temple. *Angels* will rejoyce; great was the joy when the foundation of this design was laid in the incarnation of Christ: *Luk.* 2. 13. Great therefore must their joy be when the top-stone is set up with shouting, crying, Grace, grace. The *Saints* themselves shall rejoyce unspeakably when they shall enter into the Kings Palace, and be for ever with the Lord, 1 *Thess.* 4. 17. Indeed there will be joy on all hands, except among the Devils, and damned; who shall gnash their teeth with envy at the everlasting advancement and glory of Believers. Thus Christ is altogether lovely, in the relation of a *Bridegroom.*

Thirdly, Christ is altogether lovely in the *relation of an Advocate*, 1 Joh. 2. 1. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation*; 'tis he that pleads the cause of Believers in Heaven: appears for them in the presence of God, to prevent all new breaches, and continue the state of friendship and peace betwixt God and us. In this relation Christ is altogether lovely. For, First,

First, He makes our cause his own, and acts for us in Heaven as for himself, *Heb.* 4. 15. He is touched with the tender sense of our troubles and dangers, and is not only one with us by way of *representation*, but also one with us in respect of sympathy and affection.

Secondly, Christ our *Advocate* follows our suit, and business in Heaven, as his great and main design and business, therefore in *Heb.* 7. 25. he is said to *live for ever to make intercession for us:* as if our concernments were so minded by him there, as to give up himself wholly to that work: as if all the glory and honour which is paid him in Heaven, would not satisfie him, or divert him one moment from our business.

Thirdly, He pleads the cause of Believers by his blood: it satisfies him not as other *Advocates*, to be at the expence of words and oratory, which is a cheaper way of pleading; but he pleads for us by the voice of his own blood, *Heb.* 12. 24. where we are said to be come *to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel:* every wound he received for us on earth, is a mouth opened to plead with God on our behalf in Heaven, *quot vulnera, tot ora:* and hence it is that in *Rev.* 5. 6. he is represented standing before God, *as a Lamb that had been slain:* as it were exhibiting and opening in Heaven those deadly wounds received on earth, from the justice of God upon our account: other Advocates spend their *breath*, Christ his *blood.*

Fourthly, He pleads the cause of Believers freely: other Advocates plead for reward, and exhaust the Purses while they plead the causes of their Clients.

Fifthly, In a word, he obtaineth for us all the mercies for which he pleads; no cause miscarries in his hand which he undertakes, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. O what a lovely Advocate is Christ for Believers!

Fourthly, Christ is altogether lovely in the *relation of a Friend*, for in this relation he is pleased to own his people, *Luk.* 12. 4, 5. There are certain things in which one friend manifests his affection and friendship to another, but none like Christ. For,

First, No Friend is so *open-hearted* to his friend as Christ is to his people: he reveals the very counsels and secrets of his heart to them, Joh. 15. 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*

Secondly, No Friend in the world is so *expensive and bountiful* to his friend, as Jesus Christ is to Believers, *Joh.* 15. 13. He parts with his very blood for them: *greater* love (saith he) *hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends:* he hath exhausted the precious treasures of this invaluable blood to pay our debts. O what a lovely friend is Jesus Christ to Believers!

Thirdly, No Friend *sympathises* so tenderly with his Friend in affliction, as Jesus Christ doth with his friends: in all our afflictions he is afflicted, *Heb.* 4. 15. He feels all our sorrows, wants and burthens as his own. Whence it is that the sufferings of Believers are called the sufferings of Christ, *Col.* 1. 24.

Fourthly, No Friend in the world takes that *complacency* in his Friend as Jesus Christ doth in Believers, Cant. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart* (saith he to the Spouse) *thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck:* the Hebrew here rendred *ravished*, signifies to puff up, or to make one proud; how is the Lord Jesus pleased to glory in his people! how is he taken and delighted with those gracious ornaments which himself bestows upon them! no friend so lovely as Christ.

Fifthly, No Friend in the world loves his Friend with so *ferverous, and strong affection*, as Jesus Christ loves Believers. *Jacob* loved *Rachel*, and endured for her sake the parching heat of Summer, and cold of Winter: but Christ indured the storms of the wrath of God, the heat of his indignation for our sakes. *David* manifested his love to *Absalom*, in wishing, *O that I had died for thee!* Christ manifested his love to us, not in wishes that he had died, but in death it self, in our stead, and for our sakes.

Sixthly, No Friend in the world is so *constant and unchangeable* in friendship, as Christ is, Joh. 13. 1. *Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

end. He bears with millions of provocations, and injuries, and yet will not break friendſhip with his people. *Peter* denied him, yet he will not diſown him; but after his reſurrection he ſaith, *go, tell the Diſciples, and tell Peter,* (*q. d.*) let him not think he hath forfeited by that ſin of his, his intereſt in me; though he have denied me, I will not diſown him, *Mark* 16. 7. Oh how lovely is Chriſt in the relation of a friend! I might farther ſhew you the lovelineſs of Chriſt in his *Ordinances*, and in his *providences*, in his *communion* with us, and *communications* to us: but there is no end of the account of Chriſts lovelineſs. I will rather chooſe to preſs Believers to their dutys towards this *altogether lovely Chriſt*, which I ſhall briefly diſpatch in a few words.

Uſe 1.

Firſt, Is Jeſus Chriſt altogether lovely, then I beſeech you *ſet your ſouls upon this lovely Jeſus:* methinks ſuch an object as hath been here repreſented ſhould compel love from the coldeſt breaſt, and hardeſt heart. Away with thoſe empty nothings, away with this vain deceitful world which deſerves not the thouſandth part of the love you give it: let all ſtand aſide, and give way to Chriſt. O did you but know his worth and excellency, what he is in himſelf, what he hath done for, and deſerved from you; you would need no arguments of mine to perſwade you to love him. *Uſe* 1.

Secondly, *Eſteem nothing lovely, but as it is enjoyed in Chriſt, or improved for Chriſt:* affect nothing for it ſelf, love nothing ſeparate from Jeſus Chriſt. In two things we all ſin in the love of creatures, *viz.* in the *exceſs* of our affections, loving them above the rate, and value of creatures, and in the *inordinacy* of our affections, (*i. e.*) in loving them out of their proper places. 2.

Thirdly, *Let us all be humbled for the baſeneſs of our hearts, that are ſo free of their affections to vanities, and trifles; and ſo hard to be perſwaded to the love of Chriſt, who is altogether lovely.* Oh how many pour out ſtreams of love and delight upon the vain and empty creature, whilſt no arguments can ſqueeſe out one drop of love from their ob- 3.

durate and unbelieving hearts to Jesus Christ! I have read of one *Johannes Mollius*, who was observed to go often alone, and weep bitterly; and being prest by a Friend to know the cause of his trouble; Oh, said he, it grieves me that I cannot bring this heart of mine to love Jesus Christ more fervently.

4. Fourthly, *Represent Christ as he is to the world, by your carriages towards him:* Is he altogether lovely? Let all the world see and know that he is so, by your delights in him, and communion with him, zeal for him, and readiness to part with any other lovely thing upon his account: proclaim his excellencies to the world, as the Spouse here did: convince them how much your Beloved is better than any other Beloved. Display his glorious excellencies in your heavenly Conversations: hold him forth to others, as he is in himself, altogether lovely. See that you *walk worthy of him unto all well-pleasing*, Col. 1. 10. *Shew forth the praises of Christ*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. Let not that *worthy name be blasphemed through you*, James 2. 7. He is glorious in himself, and will put glory upon you; take heed ye put not shame and dishonour upon him: he hath committed his honour to you, do not betray that trust.

5. Fifthly, *Never be ashamed to own Christ:* he is altogether lovely: he can never be a shame to you: 'twill be your great sin, to be ashamed of him. Some men glory in their *shame*, be not you ashamed of your *glory:* if you be ashamed of Christ now, he will be ashamed of you, when he shall appear in his own glory, and the glory of all his holy Angels. Be ashamed of nothing but sin, and among other sins, be ashamed especially for this sin, that you have no more love for him who is *altogether lovely.*

6. Sixthly, *Be willing to leave every thing that is lovely upon earth, that you may be with the altogether lovely Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven.* Lift up your voices with the Spouse, Rev. 20. 20. *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* 'Tis true, you must pass through the pangs of death into his bosom and enjoyment; but sure 'tis worth suffering much more than that, to be with this lovely Jesus. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for of Jesus Christ*, 2 Thes. 3. 5.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, *Strive to be Chriſt-like, as ever you would be lovely in the eyes of God and men.* Certainly my Brethren, 'tis the Spirit of Chriſt within you, and the beauty of Chriſt upon you, which only can make you lovely perſons: the more you reſemble him in holineſs, the more will you diſcover of true excellency and lovelineſs: and the more frequent and ſpiritual your converſe and communion with Chriſt is, the more of the beauty and lovelineſs of Chriſt will ſtill be ſtamped upon your Spirits, changing you into the ſame image from glory to glory. 7.

Eighthly, Let the lovelineſs of Chriſt draw all men to him. Is lovelineſs in the creature, embodied beauty, ſo attractive? And can the tranſcendent lovelineſs of Chriſt draw none? Oh the blindneſs of man! If you ſee no beauty in Chriſt, why you ſhould deſire him, 'tis becauſe the God of this world hath blinded your minds. 8.

The

The Thirteenth SERMON.

Sermon 13.

Text. Alluring the hearts of men to come to Christ by a fourth motive, contained in another Title of Christ.

HAGGAI 2. 7.

——— *And the desire of all Nations, shall come.*

THE former Chapter is mainly spent in reproving the negligence of the *Jews*, who being discouraged from time to time, had delayed the rebuilding the *Temple*: and in the mean time imployed their care, and cost in building and adorning their own houses: but at last being perswaded to set about the work, they meet with this discouragement, that such was the poverty of the present time, that the second structure would no way answer the magnificence and splendor of the first. In *Solomons* days the Nation was wealthy, now drained, so that there would be no proportion betwixt the second and the first. To this grand discouragement, the Prophet applies this relief, that whatsoever should be wanting in external pomp and glory, should be more than recompensed by the presence of Jesus Christ in this *second Temple*. For *Christ, the desire of all Nations* (saith he) shall come into it. Which by the way may give us this useful note, That the presence of Jesus Christ gives a more real and excellent glory to the places of his worship, than any external beauty, or outward

ward ornaments whatſoever can beſtow upon them. Our eyes like the *Diſciples* are apt to be dazled with the goodly ſtones of the *Temple*, and in the mean time to neglect, and overlook that which gives it its greateſt honour and beauty.

But to return, In theſe words we have both the deſcription of Chriſt, and an *index* pointing at the time of his incarnation; he is called *the deſire* of all Nations: and the time of his coming in the fleſh, 'tis plainly intimated to be while the ſecond *Temple* ſhould be ſtanding: where by the way, we find juſt cauſe to admire and bemoan the blindneſs that is hapned to the *Jews*; who owning the truth of this Prophecie, and not able to deny the deſtruction of the ſecond Temple, many hundred years paſt, will not yet be brought to acknowledge the incarnation of the trûe Meſſiah, notwithſtanding.

But to the point, the character or deſcription of Chriſt, ſtiled *the deſire of all nations*, who was to come into the world in the time of the ſecond *Temple*, *Mal.* 3. 12. and that after grievous concuſſions and ſhakings of the world, which were to make way for his coming, for ſo our Prophet here ſpeaks, *I will ſhake all nations, and the deſire of all nations ſhall come*, to which the *Apoſtle* alludes in *Heb.* 12. 26. applying this prophecie to Jeſus Chriſt, here called the *deſire of all Nations:* putting the *act* for the *object*, deſire for the thing deſired; as in Ezec. 24. 16. *the deſire of thine eyes*, that is the deſirable Wife of thy boſome. So here the *deſire of all nations*, that is *Chriſt* the *object* of the deſires of Gods elect in all nations of the world. A Saviour infinitely deſireable in himſelf, and actually deſired by all the people of God, diſperſed among all kindreds, tongues and nations in the world.

From whence this note is,

DOCT.

That the deſires of Gods Elect in all Kingdoms, and among all people of the earth, are and ſhall be drawn out after, and fixed upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *Doct.*

The

The merciful God beholding the univerſal ruines of the world by ſin, hath provided an univerſal remedy for his own Elect, in every part of the earth. Chriſt is not impropriated to any one Kingdom or Nation in the world; but intended to be Gods ſalvation to the ends of the earth, and accordingly ſpeaks the Apoſtle, Col. 2. 11. *There is neither Greek* nor *Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free; but Chriſt is all, and in all.* In the explication of this point, two things muſt be enquired into.

1. Why Chriſt is called the deſire of all Nations.
2. Upon what account the people of God in all Nations deſire him.

1. Firſt, Why he is called the deſire of all Nations: and what that Phraſe may import: and there are diverſe things that are ſuppoſed or included in it.

Firſt, That God the Father hath appointed him as a common remedy, for the ſins and miſeries of his people in all parts and quarters of the world. So in the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, the Lord expreſſeth himſelf, Iſai. 49. 6. and he ſaid, *It is a light thing that thou ſhouldeſt be my ſervant, to raiſe up the Tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael: I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou maiſt be my ſalvation to the end of the earth.* Suitable whereunto is that Prophecie, Iſai. 52. 15. *He ſhall ſprinkle many Nations.* If God had not appointed him for, he could not be deſired by all Nations.

And indeed herein the grace of God doth admirably ſhine forth in the freeneſs of it, that even the moſt barbarous Nations are not excluded from the benefit of redemption by Chriſt. This is that the *Apoſtle* admires, that Chriſt ſhould be *preached to the Gentiles*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. A people that ſeemed to be loſt in the darkneſs of Idolatry; yet even for them Chriſt was given by the Father. *Aſk of me* (ſaith he) *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.*

Secondly, Chriſt *the deſire of all Nations*, plainly notes the *ſufficiency* that is in him to ſupply the wants of the whole world: as the Sun in the Heavens ſuffices all Nations for light and influence, ſo doth the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſuffice for the Redemption, Juſtification, Sanctification and Salvation

ſalvation of the people of God, all the world over, Iſa. 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved all ye ends of the earth.*

Thirdly, It implies the *reality that is in godlineſs:* it ſhews you that Religion is no fancy, as the Atheiſtical world would perſwade us: and this evidently appears in the *uniform effects* of it upon the hearts of all men in all nations of the world, that are truely religious: all their deſires, like ſo many Needles touched by one and the ſame Loadſtone, move towards Jeſus Chriſt, and all meet together in one and the ſame bleſſed object Chriſt. Were it poſſible for the people of God to come out of all Nations, Kindreds and Languages in the world, into one place, and there confer, and compare the deſires and workings of their hearts; though they never ſaw each others face, nor heard of each others name; yet as face anſwers to face in a glaſs, ſo would their deſires after Chriſt anſwer to each other: all hearts work after him in the ſame manner, what one ſaith, all ſay; theſe are my troubles and burthens, theſe my wants and miſeries: the ſame things my deſires and fears: one and the ſame Spirit harmonically works in all Believers through the world, which could never be, if Religion were but a fancie as ſome call it, or a combination or confederacy as others call it: fancies are as various as faces; and confederacies preſuppoſe mutual acquaintance, and conference.

Fourthly, Chriſt the deſire of all Nations implies the vaſt extent his Kingdom hath and ſhall have in the world: out of every Nation under Heaven ſome ſhall be brought to Chriſt, and to Heaven by him. And though the number of Gods elect, compared with the multitudes of the ungodly in all Nations, is but a remnant, a little flock, and in that comparative ſenſe there are few that ſhall be ſaved; yet conſidered abſolutely, and in themſelves, they are a vaſt number, which no man can number, Mat. 8. 11. *Many ſhall come from the Eaſt, and from the Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.* In order whereunto the Goſpel, like the Sun in the Heavens, circuits the world: it aroſe in the *Eaſt*, and takes its courſe towards the *weſtern world*: riſing by degrees upon the remote Idolatrous Nations of the earth; out of all which a number is to

be saved, even *Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God*, Psal. 68. 31. And this consideration should move us to pray earnestly for the poor Heathens, who yet sit in darkness, and the shadow of death; there is yet hope for them.

Fifthly, It holds forth this, that when God opens the eyes of men to see their sin, and danger by it; nothing but Christ can give them satisfaction: 'tis not the amenity, fertility, riches and pleasures the Inhabitants of any Kingdom of the world do enjoy, that can quench and satisfie the desires of their souls: when once God touches their hearts with the sense of sin and misery: Christ and none but Christ is desirable and necessary in the eyes of such persons. Many Kingdoms of the world abound with riches and pleasures, the providence of God hath carved liberal portions of the good things of this life to many of them, and scarce left any thing to their desires that the world can afford. Yet all this can give no satisfaction without Jesus Christ, the desire of Nations, the one thing necessary, when once they come to see the necessity and excellency of him: then take the world who will, so they may have Christ the desire of their souls. Thus we see upon what grounds and reasons Christ is stiled the desire of all Nations.

Object. But there lies one great Objection against this truth, which must be satisfied, *viz.* if Christ be the desire of all Nations, how comes it to pass, that Jesus Christ finds no entertainment in so many Nations of the world, among whom Christianity is hissed at, and Christians not tolerated to live among them; who see no beauty in him that they should desire him.

Sol. First, We must remember the Nations of the World have their times and seasons of conversion. Those that once embraced Christ, have now lost him, and Idols are now set up in the places where he once was sweetly worshipped. The Sun of the Gospel is gone down upon them, and now shines in another *Hemisphere*: and so the Nations of the World are to have their distinct days, and seasons of illumination. The Gospel, like the Sea, gaineth in one place what it loseth in another: and in the times and seasons appointed by the Father they come successively to be enlightned in the knowledge of Christ; and then shall that promise

promiſe be fulfilled, Iſai. 49. 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Redeemer of Iſrael, and his Holy One, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a ſervant of Rulers; Kings ſhall ſee and ariſe, Princes alſo ſhall worſhip, becauſe of the Lord that is faithful.*

Secondly, Let it alſo be remembered, that although Chriſt be rejected by the Rulers and Body of many Nations; yet he is the deſire of all the Elect of God diſperſed, and ſcattered among thoſe Nations.

Secondly, In the next place we are to enquire, upon what account Chriſt becomes the deſire of all Nations, (*i. e.*) of all thoſe in all the Nations of the world that belong to the election of grace. And the true ground and reaſon thereof is, becauſe Chriſt only hath that in himſelf which relieves their wants and anſwers to all their needs. As, 2.

Firſt, They are all by nature under condemnation, *Rom.* 5. 16, 18. under the curſe of the Law; againſt which nothing is found in Heaven or earth able to relieve their Conſciences but the blood of ſprinkling, the pure and perfect righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus: and hence it is that Chriſt becomes ſo deſirable in the eyes of poor ſinners all the world over. If any thing in nature could be found to pacifie and purge the Conſciences of men from guilt and fear; Chriſt would never be deſirable in their eyes; but finding no other remedy but the blood of Jeſus, to him therefore ſhall all the ends of the earth look for righteouſneſs and for peace.

Secondly, All Nations of the world are polluted with the filth of ſin, both in nature and practice, which they ſhall ſee, and bitterly bewail when the light of the Goſpel ſhall ſhine amongſt them; and the ſame light by which this ſhall be diſcovered, will alſo diſcover the only remedy of this evil to lie in the ſpirit of Chriſt, the only fountain opened to all Nations for ſanctification and cleanſing: and this will make the Lord Jeſus incomparably deſirous in their eyes. Oh how welcome will he be that cometh unto them, not by blood only, but by water alſo! *John* 1. 5, 6.

Thirdly, When the light of the Goſpel ſhall ſhine upon the Nations, they ſhall then ſee, that by reaſon of the guilt and filth of ſin, they are all barr'd out of Heaven. Thoſe dores are chained up againſt them, and that none but Chriſt can open an entrance for them into that Kingdom of God:

that *no man cometh to the Father but by him*, John 14. 6. *neither is there any name under Heaven given among men, whereby they must be saved, but the name of Christ*, Act. 4. 12. Hence the hearts of sinners shall pant after him, as the Hart panteth for the water brooks. And thus we see upon what grounds Christ becomes the *desire of all Nations*. The improvement of all followeth in five several uses of the point, *viz.*

1. For Information.
2. For Examination.
3. For Consolation.
4. For Exhortation.
5. For Direction.

Use for Information.

Use 1. First, Is Christ the desire of all Nations, *How vile a sin is it then in any Nation, upon whom the light of the Gospel hath shined, to reject Jesus Christ*, and say as those in Job 21. 14. *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* To thrust away his worship, government, and servants from amongst them, and in effect to say as it is, *Luke* 19. 14. we will not have this man to reign over us: thus did the Jews, *Act.* 13. 46. they put away Christ from among them, and thereby judged themselves unworthy of eternal life. This is at once a fearful *sin*, and a dreadful *sign*: how soon did vengeance overtake them, like the overthrow of *Sodom!* O let it be for a warning unto all Nations to the end of the world. He would have gathered the Children of *Israel* under his wings, as a *Hen* doth her brood, even when the *Roman Eagle* was hovering over them, but they would not: therefore their Houses were left unto them desolate, their City and Temple made an heap.

Secondly, If Jesus Christ be the desire of all Nations, *how incomparably happy then must that Nation be, that enjoys Christ in the power and purity of his Gospel-ordinances!* If Christ under a vail made *Canaan* a glorious land (as it's called) *Dan.* 11. 41. what a glorious place must that Nation be that beholds him with open face in the bright Sunshine of the Gospel!

Goſpel! O *England* know thy happineſs, and the day of thy viſitation: what others deſire thou enjoyeſt: provoke not the Lord Jeſus to depart from thee, by corrupting his worſhip, hankering after Idolatry, abuſing his Meſſengers, oppreſſing his people, leſt his ſoul depart from thee.

2d *Uſe for Examination.*

Uſe 2. If Chriſt be the deſire of all Nations, examine whether he be the deſire of your ſouls in particular, elſe you ſhall have no benefit by him. Are your deſires after Chriſt true ſpiritual deſires? Reflect, I beſeech you, upon the frames and tempers of your hearts. Can you ſay of your deſires after Chriſt, as *Peter* did of his love to Chriſt, Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I deſire thee: try your deſires as to their ſincerity, by the following characters.

Firſt, Are they vehement and ardent? hath Chriſt the ſupreme place in your deſires? do you eſteem all things to be but droſs and dung in compariſon of the excellencies of Jeſus Chriſt your Lord? *Phil.* 3. 8. Is he to you as the refuge City to the manſlayer, *Heb.* 6. 18, 19. as a ſpring of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great Rock in a weary land, *Iſai.* 32. 2. Such vehement deſires are true deſires.

Secondly, Are your deſires after Chriſt univerſal? (*i. e.*) is every thing in Chriſt deſirable in your eyes? the *Hypocrite* like the *Harlot* is for a divided Chriſt: they would be called by his name, but live upon their own ſtock, *Iſai.* 4. 1. if his holineſs, and government, his croſs, and ſufferings be deſirable for his ſake, ſuch univerſal deſires are right deſires.

Thirdly, Are your deſires after Chriſt induſtrious deſires, uſing all the means of accompliſhing what you deſire? You ſay you deſire Chriſt, but what will you do to obtain your deſires? If you ſeek him carefully and inceſſantly in all the ways of duty, if you will ſtrive in prayer, labour to believe, cut off right hands, and pluck out right eyes, (*i. e.*) be content to part with the moſt profitable and pleaſant ways of ſin, that you may enjoy Chriſt the deſire of your ſouls, then are your deſires right deſires.

Fourthly, Are your deſires after Chriſt permanent deſires, or only a ſuddain mood and fit, which goes off again without

out effect? If your desires after Christ abide upon your hearts, if your longings be after him at all times, though not in the same height and degree, then are your desires right desires? Christ always dwells in the desires of his people, they can feel him in their desires, when they cannot discern him in their loves or delights.

Fifthly, Will your desires after Christ admit no satisfaction, nor find rest any where but in the injoyment of Christ, then are your desires right desires: the soul that desires Christ can never be at rest till it come home to Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2, 6. *Phil.* 1. 23. The Devil can satisfie others with riches and pleasures of this world, as Children are quieted with Rattles. If nothing but Christ can rest and terminate your desires, surely such restless desires are right desires.

Sixthly, Do your desires after Christ spring from a deep sense of your need and want of Christ: hath conviction opened your eyes to see your misery, to feel your burthens, and to make you sensible that your remedy lies only in the Lord Jesus, then are your desires right desires: bread and water are made necessary and desirable by hunger and thirst. By these things try the truth of your desires after Christ.

3d Use for Consolation.

Use 3. Do you indeed upon serious trial find such desires after Christ, as were described above, Oh bless the Lord for that day wherein Christ the desire of Nations became the desire of your souls, and for your comfort know that you are happy and blessed souls at present.

First, Blessed in this, that your eyes have been opened to see both the want and the worth of Christ. Had not Christ applied his precious eye-salve to the eyes of your mind, you could never have desired him, you would have said with them in Isai. 53. 2, 3. *He hath no form nor comliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him:* or as they to the Spouse, Cant. 5. 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* Oh blessed souls, inlightned of the Lord; to see those things that are hid from them that perish!

Secondly,

Secondly, You are bleſſed in this, that your deſires after Chriſt are a ſure evidence that the deſire of Chriſt is towards you: had he not firſt deſired you, you could never have deſired him. We may ſay of deſires as it is ſaid of love; we deſire him becauſe he firſt deſired us: your deſires after Chriſt are inflamed from the deſires of Chriſt after you.

Thirdly, Bleſſed in this, that your deſires ſhall ſurely be ſatisfied, Mat. 5. 6. *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled:* Prov. 10. 24. *The deſires of the righteous ſhall be granted.* God never raiſed ſuch deſires as theſe in the ſouls of his people to be a torment to them for ever.

Fourthly, Bleſſed in this, that God hath guided your deſires to make the beſt choice that ever was made in the world: whilſt the deſires of others are hunting after riches, pleaſure and honours in the world, toiling themſelves like Children in purſuit of a painted Butterfly, which when they have caught, doth but daub their fingers: God mean while hath directed your deſires to Chriſt, the moſt excellent object in Heaven or earth. Any good will ſatisfie ſome men, Oh happy ſoul if none but Chriſt can ſatisfie thee, *Pſal.* 4. 6.

Fifthly, Bleſſed in this, that there is a work of grace certainly wrought upon thy ſoul, and theſe very deſires after Chriſt are a part thereof.

Sixthly, Bleſſed in this, that theſe deſires after Chriſt keep thy ſoul active and working after him continually in the ways of duty, Pſal. 27. 4. *One thing have I deſired, that will I ſeek after.* Deſire will be a continual ſpring to diligence and induſtry in the ways of duty: the deſire of the end quickens to the uſe of means, *Prov.* 18. 1. Others may fall aſleep and caſt off duty, but it will be hard for you to do ſo, whoſe ſouls burn with deſire after Chriſt.

Seventhly, Bleſſed in this, that your deſires after Chriſt will make death much the ſweeter and eaſier to you, Phil. 1. 23. *I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* When a Chriſtian was once asked, whether he were willing to dye? He returned this anſwer, let him be unwilling to dye, who is unwilling to go to Chriſt: and much like it was that of another, *vivere renuo, ut Chriſto vivam*, I refuſe this life, to live with Chriſt.

Illius eſt nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Chriſtum.

4th Uſe

4th Use for Exhortation.

Use 4. In the fourth place, let me exhort and perswade all to make Jesus Christ the desire and choice of their souls. And here I fall in with the main scope and design of the Gospel: and Oh that I could effectually press home this Exhortation upon your hearts. Let me offer some moving Considerations to you, and the Lord accompany them to your hearts.

First, Every Creature naturally desires its own preservation, do not you desire the preservation of your precious and immortal souls? If you do, then make Christ your desire and choice, without whom they can never be preserved, *Jude vers.* 1.

Secondly, don't your souls earnestly desire the bodies they live in? how tender are they over them, how careful to provide for them? though they pay a dear rent for those Tenements they live in: and is not union with Christ infinitely more desirable than the union of soul and body? Oh covet union with him, then shall your souls be happy, when your bodies drop off from them at death, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 3. yea, soul and body shall be happy in him, and with him for evermore.

Thirdly, How do the men of this world desire the enjoyments of it? They pant after the dust of the earth: they rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of carefulness; and all this for very vanity. Shall a worldling do more for earth than you for Heaven? Shall the Creature be so earnestly desired, and Christ neglected?

Fourthly, What do all your desires in this world benefit you, if you go Christless? Suppose you had the desire of your hearts in these things, how long shall you have comfort in them if you miss Christ?

Fifthly, Doth Christ desire you, who have nothing lovely or desirable in you? And have you no desires after Christ, the most lovely, and desirable one in both worlds? His desires are towards you, *Prov.* 8. 31. O make him the desire and choice of your souls.

Sixthly, How absolutely necessary is Jesus Christ to your souls? Bread and water, breath and life is not so necessary

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as Christ is, *One thing is neceſſary*, Luk. 10. 42. and that one thing is Christ: if you miſs your deſires in other things, you may yet be happy; but if you miſs Christ, you are undone for ever.

Seventhly, How ſuitable a good is Christ to your ſouls? Comprizing whatſoever they want, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. Set your hearts where you will, none will be found to match and ſuit them as Christ doth.

Eighthly, How great are the benefits that will redound to you by Jeſus Christ? In him you ſhall have a rich inheritance ſetled upon you: all things ſhall be yours when you are Chriſts, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. and is not ſuch a Christ worth deſiring?

Ninthly, All your well-grounded hopes of glory are built upon your union with Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. If you miſs Christ, you muſt dye without hope; will not this draw your deſires to him?

Tenthly, Suppoſe you were at the Judgement Seat of God, where you muſt ſhortly ſtand; and ſaw the terrors of the Lord in that day; the *Sheep* divided from the *Goats*, the ſentences of abſolution and condemnation paſt by the great and awful Judge, upon the righteous and the wicked; would not Christ be then deſirable in your eyes? As ever you expect to ſtand with Comfort at that Bar, let Christ be the deſire and choice of your ſouls now.

5th *Uſe for Direction.*

Uſe 5. Do theſe, or any other Conſiderations put thee upon this enquiry, how ſhall I get my deſires kindled and inflamed towards Christ? Alas, my heart is cold and dead, not a ſerious deſire ſtirring in it after Christ: to ſuch I ſhall offer the following Directions.

Direction 1.

Redeem ſome time every day for meditation: get out of the noiſe and clamour of the world, *Pſal.* 4. 4. and ſeriouſly bethink your ſelves how the preſent ſtate of your ſoul ſtands, and how it is like to go with you for ever: here all ſound Converſion begins, *Pſal.* 119. 59.

Direction 2.

Consider seriously of that lamentable state in which you came into the world: children of wrath by nature, under the curse and condemnation of the Law. So that either your state must be changed, or you inevitably damned, *Joh.* 3.3.

Direction 3.

Consider the way and course you have taken, since you came into the world; proceeding from iniquity to iniquity. What Command of God have you not violated a thousand times over? What sin is committed in the world, that you are not one way or other guilty of before God? How many secret sins are upon your score, unknown to the most intimate Friend you have in the world? Either this guilt must be separated from your souls, or your souls from God to all eternity.

Direction 4.

Think upon the severe wrath of God due to every sin, *The wages of sin is death,* Rom. 6. *ult.* and how intolerable the fulness of that wrath must be when a few drops sprinkled upon the Conscience in this world is so insupportable, that it hath made some to choose strangling rather than life: and yet this wrath must abide for ever upon you, if you get not interest in Jesus Christ, *Joh.* 3. 63.

Direction 5.

Ponder well the happy state and condition they are in, who have obtained pardon and peace by Jesus Christ, *Psal.* 32. 12. And seeing the grace of God is free, and you are yet under the means thereof, why may not you be as capable thereof as others?

Direction

Direction 6.

Seriouſly conſider the great uncertainty of your time, and preciouſneſs of the opportunities of ſalvation, never to be recovered when they are once paſt, *Joh.* 9. 4. Let this provoke you to lay hold upon thoſe golden ſeaſons, whilſt they are yet with you; that you may not bewail your folly and madneſs when they are out of your reach.

Direction 7.

Aſſociate your ſelves with ſerious Chriſtians, get into their acquaintance, and beg their aſſiſtance; beſeech them to pray for you: and ſee that you reſt not here, but be frequently upon your knees begging of the Lord a new heart, and a new ſtate.

In Concluſion of the whole, let me beſeech and beg all the people of God, as upon my knees, to take heed and beware leſt by the careleſneſs, and ſcandals of their lives, they quench the weak deſires beginning to kindle in the hearts of others. You know what the Law of God awards for ſtriking a woman with Child, ſo that her fruit go from her, *Exod.* 21. 22, 23. Oh ſhed not ſoul blood by ſtifling the hopeful deſires of any after Chriſt.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt the deſire of all Nations.

The Fourteenth SERMON.

Sermon 14.

Text. Containing the fifth Motive to apply Christ, drawn from another excellent Title of Christ.

1 Cor. 2. 8.

Which none of the Princes of this world have known, for had they known him, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory.

IN this Chapter the *Apostle* discourses to the *Corinthians* the excellency of his Ministry, both to obviate the contempt which some might cast upon it for want of humane Ornaments; and to give the greater authority unto it among all: and whereas the spiritual simplicity of his Ministry laid it under the contempt of some, he removes that several ways, by showing them,

First, That it was not suitable to the design, and end of his ministry, his aim being to know nothing among them, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, *vers.* 1, 2.

Secondly, Neither was it for the advantage of their souls: it might indeed tickle their *fancies*, but could be no solid foundation to their faith and comfort, *vers.* 4, 5.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Though his diſcourſes ſeemed jejune, and dry to carnal hearers, yet it had a depth, and an excellency in it, which ſpiritual and judicious Chriſtians ſaw and acknowledged, *verſ.* 6, 7.

Fourthly, Therefore this excellent wiſdom which he preached, far tranſcended all the natural wiſdom of this world: yea, the moſt raiſed and improved underſtandings of thoſe that were moſt renowned, and admired in that age for wiſdom, verſ. 8. *Which none of the Princes of this world knew.*

In which words we have,

1. A Negative Propoſition.
2. The proof of the Propoſition.

Firſt, A Negative Propoſition, none of the Princes of this world knew that Spiritual Wiſdom which he taught. By *Princes of this world*, or rather *principes ſeculi*, the Princes of that age, he means, as *Camero* well notes, the learned *Rabbies*, *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, renowned for wiſdom and learning among them, and honoured upon that account, as ſo many *Princes*: but he adds a diminutive term, which darkens all their glory. They are but *the Princes of this world*, utterly unacquainted with the wiſdom of the other world. To which he adds, 1.

Secondly, A clear and full proof, *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* In which words we find one of Chriſts glorious and royal Titles, *the Lord of glory:* upon which Title my preſent Diſcourſe muſt fall. The words being fitly rendred, and nothing of ambiguity in them, they give us this obſervation. 2.

DOCT.

That Chriſt Crucified is the Lord of Glory. *Doct.*

Great and excellent is the glory of Jeſus Chriſt; the Scriptures every where proclaim his glory. Yea, we may obſerve a notable *Climax*, or gradation in thoſe Scriptures that ſpeak of his glory. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of him,

him, calls him *glorious*, Isai. 4. 2. *In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.* *John* speaking of his glory rises a step higher, and ascribeth to him *a glory as of the only begotton Son of the Father*, John 1. 14. (*i. e.*) a glory meet for, and becoming the Son of God: proper to him and incommunicable to any other. The Apostle *James* rises yet higher, and doth not only call him glorious, or glorious as the only begotten of the Father: but *the glory*, *Jam.* 2. 1. glory in the abstract; *my brethren* (saith he) *have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glory, with respect of persons:* for the word Lord, which is in our translation, is a supplement: Christ is glory it self: yea, *the glory emphatically* so stiled; the glory of Heaven; the glory of *Sion*; the glory of our souls for ever. The Author to the *Hebrews* goes yet higher, and calls him not simply the glory, but the brightness of his Fathers glory, *Heb.* 1. 3. as who should say, the radiancy, sparkling, or beaming forth of his Fathers glory, the very splendor, or refulgency of divine glory. Oh what a glorious Lord is our Lord Jesus Christ! the bright sparkling *Diamond* of Heaven: who shines in glory there, above the glory of Angels and Saints, as the glory of the Sun excels the lesser twinkling Stars. When he appeared to *Paul* in *Acts* 26. 13. I saw, said he, a light from Heaven, *above the brightness of the Sun, shining round about me:* needs must the glory of Christ be unspeakable, who reflects glory upon all that be with him, *John* 17. 24. and stamps glory upon all that belongs to him. His works on earth were *glorious works*, *Luk.* 13. 17. The purchased liberty of his people, a glorious liberty, *Rom.* 8. 21. The Church his mystical body, a glorious Church, *Eph.* 5. 27. The Gospel which reveals him, is a glorious Gospel, 1 *Tim.* 1. 11.

Ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης.

But more particularly, let us consider the glory of Christ, as it is distinguished into his either,

1. Essential
2. Mediatorial } Glory.

1. First, The *Essential Glory* of Christ which he hath as God from everlasting; which is unspeakable and unconceivable glory: for (saith the Apostle) Phil. 2. 6. *He being in the form*

form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God (i.e.) he had a Peerage, or equality with his Father in glory, Joh. 10. 30. *I and my Father are one:* and again, Joh. 16. 15. *All things that the Father hath, are mine:* the ſame name, the ſame nature, the ſame eſſential properties, the ſame will, and the ſame glory.

Secondly, The *Mediatorial glory* of Chriſt is exceeding great: this is proper to him, as head of the Church, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood. Of this glory the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks, Phil. 2. 9, 10. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name,* &c. ὑπερύψωσε exalted above all exaltation. Now the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt conſiſteth either, 2.

1. In the fulneſs of Grace inherent in him.
2. Or in the Dignity and Authority put upon him.

Firſt, In the fulneſs of grace inherent in him: the humanity of Chriſt is filled with grace, as the Sun with light, Joh. 1. 14. *Full of grace and truth:* never any creature was ſo filled by the Spirit of Grace, as the man Chriſt Jeſus is filled, for *God gives not the ſpirit to him by meaſure,* Joh. 3. 34. By reaſon of this fulneſs of grace inherent in him, he is *fairer than the Children of men,* Pſal. 45. 2. Excelling all the Saints in ſpiritual luſtre, and gracious excellencies.

Secondly, In the Dignity and Authority put upon him: he is crowned King in *Sion:* all power in Heaven and earth is given unto him, *Mat.* 28. 18. he is Lawgiver to the Church, *James* 4. 12. All acts of worſhip are to be performed in his name, Prayer, Preaching, Cenſures, Sacraments, all to be adminiſtred in his name. Church Officers are Commiſſioned by him, *Eph.* 4. 11. The Judgement of the world in the great day will be adminiſtred by him, Mat. 25. 31. *Then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory.*

To conclude, Jeſus Chriſt ſhall have glory and honour aſcribed to him for evermore by Angels and Saints, upon the account of his Mediatorial work. This ſome Divines call his paſſive glory; the glory which he is to receive from his redeemed ones, Rev. 5. 8, 9, 10. *And when he had taken*

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the Book, the four Beasts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden Vials full of Odours, which are the prayers of the Saints; and they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, &c. And thus you see, that our Lord Jesus Christ is upon all accounts the *Lord of Glory*. The Uses follow.

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *How wonderful was the love of Christ the Lord of glory, to be so abased and humbled as he was for us, vile, and sinful dust!* 'Tis astonishing to conceive that ever Jesus Christ should strip himself out of his Robes of Glory, to cloath himself with the thread-bare tatters of our flesh. Oh what a stoop did he make in his incarnation for us! If the most magnificent *Monarch* upon earth, had been degraded into a Toad: if the *Sun* in the Heavens had been turned into a wandring Atom: if the most glorious *Angel* in Heaven, had been transformed into a silly Fly; it had been nothing to the abasement of the Lord of Glory. This act is every where celebrated in Scripture, as the great mystery, the astonishing wonder of the whole world, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. *Phil.* 2. 8. *Rom.* 8. 3. The Lord of glory looked not like himself, when he came in the habit of a man, Isai. 53. 3. *We hid as it were our faces from him:* nay, rather like a worm, than a man, Psal. 22. 6. *A reproach of men, and despised of the people.* The Birds of the air, and Beasts of the earth were here provided of better accommodations than the Lord of glory, *Mat.* 8. 20. Oh stupendious abasement! Oh love unspeakable! *Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich,* 2 Cor. 8. 9. He put off the Crown of *Glory*, to put on the Crown of *Thorns: quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior*, said *Bernard*, the lower he humbled himself for me, the dearer he shall be to me.

Inference

Inference 2.

How tranſcendently glorious is the advancement of Believers by their union with the Lord of Glory! This alſo is an admirable, and aſtoniſhing myſtery; 'tis the higheſt dignity of which our *nature* is capable, to be *hypoſtatically* united, and the greateſt glory of which our *perſons* are capable to be *myſtically* united to this Lord of Glory; to be bone of his bone, and fleſh of his fleſh. O what is this! Chriſtian doſt thou know, and believe all this, and thy heart not burn within thee in love to Chriſt? O then what a heart haſt thou? What art thou by nature, but ſinful duſt, a loathſom ſinner, viler than the vileſt Toad, caſt out to the loathing of thy perſon in the day of thy nativity! O that ever the Lord of Glory ſhould unite himſelf to ſuch a lump of vileneſs! take ſuch a wretch into his very boſom! Be aſtoniſhed O Heavens and earth at this; this is the great myſtery which the Angels ſtoopt down to look into. Such an honour as this could never have entred into the heart of man; it would have ſeemed a rude blaſphemy in us once to have thought, or ſpoken of ſuch a thing, had not Chriſt made the firſt motion thereof. Yet how long didſt thou make this Lord of Glory wait upon thy undetermined will, before he gained thy conſent? Might he not juſtly have ſpurned thee into Hell upon thy firſt refuſal, and never have made thee ſuch another offer? Wilt thou not ſay, Lord, what am I, and what is my Fathers houſe, that ſo great a King ſhould ſtoop ſo far beneath himſelf to ſuch a worm as I am! That ſtrength ſhould unite it ſelf to weakneſs, infinite glory to ſuch baſeneſs! O grace, grace, for ever to be admired! *Inference* 2.

Inference 3.

Is Jeſus Chriſt the Lord of Glory, *then let no man count himſelf diſhonoured by ſuffering the vileſt indignities for his ſake:* the Lord of Glory puts glory upon the very ſufferings you undergo in this world for him. Moſes *eſteemed the reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt*, Heb. 11.26. He caſt a Kingdom at his heels, to be crowned with reproaches *Inference* 3.

proaches for the name of Christ. The *Diadem* of *Egypt* was not half so glorious, as self-denial for Christ. This Lord of Glory freely degraded himself for thee, wilt thou stand huckling with him upon terms? 'Tis certainly your honour to be dishonoured for Christ, *Act.* 5. 41. To you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, *Phil.* 1. 29. The gift of suffering is there matched with the gift of faith: 'tis given as an *honorarium*, a badge of Honour to suffer for the Lord of Glory: as all have not the honour to wear the Crown of Glory in Heaven; so few have the honour to wear the chain of Christ upon earth. *Thuanus* reports of *Lodovicus Marsacus*, a *Knight* of *France*, that being led to suffer with other Martyrs who were bound, and he unbound, because a person of Honour; he cryed out, Why don't you honour me with a Chain too, and create me a Knight of that Noble Order? My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, *Jam.* 1. 2. (*i. e.*) tryals by sufferings. *David* thought it 'an honour to be vile for God, and that's a true observation, that disgrace it self is glorious, when endured for the Lord of Glory.

Cur me non quoque torque donas, & insti nis hujus ordinis militem creas? Thuanus.

Inference 4.

Is Christ the Lord of Glory, *How glorious then shall the Saints one day be, when they shall be made like this glorious Lord, and partake of his glory in Heaven*, John 17. 22. *the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them*: yea, the vile bodies of Believers, shall be made like to the glorious body of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 21. What glory then will be communicated to their souls? True, his essential glory is incommunicable; but there is a glory, which Christ will communicate to his people, *When he comes to judge the world, he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*, 2 Thes. 1. 10. Where he seemeth to account his social glory, which shall result from his Saints, a great part of his own glory: as we have now fellowship with him in his sufferings, so we shall have a fellowship or communion with him in his glory: when he shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory: then the poorest Believer shall be more glorious than *Solomon* in all his *Royalty*. It was a pious saying of *Luther*, that he had rather be *Christianus Rusticus*, *quam Ethnicus Alexander*,

Alexander, a Chriſtian *Clown*, than a Pagan *Emperor*; the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: though he live next dore to a graceleſs Nobleman: but it doth not yet appear what they ſhall be. The day will come, it will certainly come, for the Lord hath ſpoken it, when they ſhall ſhine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

Inference 5.

How hath the Devil blindfolded, and deluded them, that are ſcared off from Chriſt by the fears of being diſhonoured by him? Many perſons have half a mind to Religion, but when they conſider the generality of its profeſſors to be perſons of the loweſt and meaneſt rank in the world, and that reproaches and ſufferings attend that way; they ſhrink back as men aſhamed, and as *Salvian* ſaith, *mali eſſe coguntur, ne viles habeantur*, they chooſe rather to remain wicked, than to become vile: but to them that believe, Chriſt is an honour: as the word which we tranſlate precious might be rendred, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. Till God open mens eyes thus, they will put evil for good, and good for evil. But O dear bought honours for which men ſtake their ſouls, and everlaſting happineſs! *Paul* was not of your mind, yet for birth he was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*, for dignity and eſteem, a *Phariſee* for moral accompliſhments, touching the Law blameleſs: yet all this he trampled under his feet, counting it all but droſs and dung in compariſon of Jeſus Chriſt. *Moſes* had more honour to lay down for Chriſt than you, yet it was no temptation to him to conceal or deny the faith of Chriſt. Noble *Galeacius* would not be withheld from Chriſt by the ſplendor and glory of *Italy*. But Oh how doth the glory of this world dazle and blind the eyes of many! *How can ye believe* (ſaith Chriſt) *who receive honour one of another*, John 5. 44. Saints and ſinners upon this account are wonders to one the other. 'Tis the wonder of the world to ſee Chriſtians glorying in reproaches, they wonder that the Saints run not with them into the ſame exceſs of riot. And it is a wonder to Believers how ſuch poor toys and empty titles (rather than titles of honour) ſhould keep the world as it doth from Jeſus Chriſt, and their everlaſting happineſs in him. *Inference* 5.

Inference 6.

Inference 6. If Christ be the Lord of Glory, *how careful should all be who profess him, that they do not dishonour Jesus Christ, whose name is called upon them?* Christ is a glory to you, be not you a shame and dishonour to him. How careful had Christians need be to draw every line and action of their lives exactly. The more glorious Christ is, the more circumspect and watchful ye had need to be. How lovely would Jesus Christ appear to the world, if the lives of Christians did adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour in all things! Remember you represent the Lord of Glory to the world: 'tis not your honour only, but the honour of Christ which is engaged, and concerned in your actions. O let not the carelesness, or scandals of your life make Jesus Christ ashamed to be called your Lord. When *Israel* had grievously revolted from God, he bids *Moses* rise, and get him down from thence, for (saith he) *thy people* which thou hast brought forth out of *Egypt*, have corrupted themselves, *Deut.* 9. 12. as if the Lord were ashamed to own them for his people any longer. It was a cutting question, *Jam.* 2. 7. apt to startle the Consciences of those loose professors; *do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?* Your duty is to adorn the Gospel by your Conversations, *Titus* 2. 10. The words signifie to deck, trim, or adorn the Gospel, to make it neat, trim, and lovely to the eyes of beholders. When there is such a beautiful harmony, and lovely proportion betwixt Christs Doctrine, and your practices, as there is in the works of Creation: wherein the comliness and elegancy of the world much consists (for to this the Apostles word here alludes) then do we walk suitably to the Lord of Glory.

Inference 7.

Inference 7. *What delight should Christians take in their daily converse with Jesus Christ in the way of duty?* Your converses in prayer, hear-

Suppose (saith Mr. *Rutherford*) there were no letter of a command, yet there is a suitableness betwixt the Law engraven on the heart, and the spiritual matter commanded— there is an Heaven in the bosom of prayer, though there were not a granting of the suit. *Rutherfords* Treatise of the Covenant, *p.* 71.

ing,

ing, and meditation are with the Lord of Glory: the greateſt Peers in a Kingdom, account it more honour to be in the preſence of a King bareheaded, or upon the knee at *Court*, than to have thouſands ſtanding bare to them in the *Country*. When you are called to duties of communion with Chriſt, you are called to the greateſt honour, dignified with the nobleſt priviledge creatures are capable of in this world: had you but a ſenſe of that honour God puts upon you by this means, you would not need ſo much tugging and ſtriving to bring a dead and backward heart into the ſpecial preſence of Jeſus Chriſt. When he ſaith, ſeek ye my face, your hearts would echo to his calls, thy face, Lord, will we ſeek: But alas, the glory of Chriſt is much hid and vailed by ignorance and unbelief from the eyes of his own people; 'tis but ſeldom the beſt of Saints, by the eye of faith, do ſee the King in his Glory.

Inference 8.

If Chriſt be ſo glorious, *how ſhould Believers long to be with him, and behold him in his glory above?* Moſt men need patience to *dye*, a Believer ſhould need patience to *live*. *Paul* thought it well worth enduring the pangs of death, to get a ſight of Jeſus Chriſt in his glory, Phil. 1. 23. *The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and patient waiting for of Chriſt*, (ſaith the Apoſtle) 2 *Theſ.* 3. 5. intimating that the Saints have great need of patience to enable them to endure the ſtate of diſtance and ſeparation from Chriſt, ſo long as they muſt endure it in this world. The Spirit and the Bride ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay come, and let him that is a thirſt come, even ſo come Lord Jeſus, and be thou as a ſwift Roe upon the Mountains of Separation. *Inference* 8.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of Glory.

The

The Fifteenth SERMON.

Sermon 15.

Text. Opening the sixth Motive to come to Christ, contained in the sixth and last Title of Christ.

LUKE 2. 25.

———*Waiting for the* [*Consolation*] *of Israel.*

SEveral Glorious Titles of Christ have been already spoken to, out of each of which, much comfort flows to Believers: 'tis comfortable to a wounded soul to eye him as a *Physician:* comfortable to a condemned and unworthy soul, to look upon him under the notion of the *Mercy.* The lovelineſs, the deſirableneſs, and the glory of Christ are all ſo many ſprings of Conſolation. But now I am to ſhew you from this Scripture, that the Saints have not only much conſolation from Christ, but that Christ himſelf is the *very Conſolation* of Believers: he is pure comfort wrapped up in fleſh and blood.

In this Context you have an account of *Simeons* Prophecie concerning Christ; and in this Text, a deſcription of the Perſon, and quality of *Simeon* himſelf, who is deſcribed two wayes.

{ 1. By his *Practice.*
{ 2. By his *Principle.*

His

His practice was heavenly and holy, he was a *just and devout man:* the principle from which his righteousness and holiness did flow, was his faith in Christ; *he waited for the consolation of Israel.* In which words by way of *Periphrasis* we have,

1. A description of Christ, the Consolation of *Israel.*
2. The description of a Believer, one that waiteth for Christ.

First. That *the Consolation of Israel* is a phrase descriptive of Jesus Christ is beyond all doubt, if you consult *vers.* 26. where he *(i.e.) Simeon* is satisfied by receiving Christ into his arms, *the Consolation* for which he had so long waited. 1.

Secondly, And that waiting for Christ is a phrase describing the Believers of those times, that preceeded the incarnation of Christ, is past doubt; they all waited for that blessed day: but it was *Simeons* lot to fall just upon that happy nick of time, wherein the Prophecies and Promises of his incarnation were fulfilled. *Simeon* and others that waited with him, were sensible that the time of the Promise was come, which could not but raise (as indeed it did) a general expectation of him, *John* 9. 19. but *Simeons* faith was confirmed by a particular revelation, *vers.* 26. that he should see Christ before he saw death, which could not but greatly encourage and raise his expectation to look out for him, whose coming would be the greatest consolation to the whole *Israel* of God. *The Consolation.* παράκλησις. The Spirit is frequently called in Scripture, παράκλητος *the Comforter*, but Christ in this place is called παράκλησις comfort or consolation it self; the reason of both is given in John 16. 14. *He shall take of mine and shew it unto you:* where Christ is said to be the matter, and the Spirit, the applier of true comfort to the people of God. Now this consolation is here expressed both with a singular *Emphasis* [*the Consolation*] intimating that there is nothing of consolation in any thing beside him: all other comforts compared with this, are not worth a naming. And as it is emphatically expressed, so it is also limited and bounded within the compass of Gods *Israel (i.e.)* true Believers stiled *the Israel of God*, whether Jews or Gentiles, *Gal.* 6. 16. From whence the point of Doctrine is, 2.

Phrasis est Judæis tum temporis familiaris & notissima, qua Messiæ adventum significabatur. Lodov. Capell.

DOCT.

DOCT.

Doct. *That Jesus Christ is the only Consolation of Believers, and of none besides them.*

So speaks the Apostle, Phil. 3. 3. *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* Those that *worship God in the Spirit* are sincere Believers, to such sincere Believers Christ is consolation, *our rejoycing is in Christ Jesus:* and they have no consolation in any thing beside him, nothing in the world can give them comfort without Christ, *we have no confidence in the flesh.* The Gospel is glad tidings of great joy, but that which makes it to be so, is Jesus Christ whom it imports and reveals to us, *Luke* 2. 10, 11. In the opening of this comfortable point, four things must be spoken to, for the right stating the method of our Discourse, *viz.*

1. What is meant by Consolation.
2. That Christ, and he only is Consolation to Believers.
3. That Believers only have Consolation in Christ.
4. How it comes to pass, that any Believer should be dejected; since Christ is Consolation to all Believers.

1. The first thing to be opened, is the nature of Consolation, which is nothing else but *the chearfulness of a mans spirit whereby he is upheld, and fortified against all evils felt, or feared.* Consolation is to the soul, what health is to the body after wasting sickness, or the reviving Spring to the earth, after a long and hard Winter: and there are three sorts of consolation, or comfort suitable to the disposition and temper of the mind, *viz.*

Natural,
Sinful and
Spiritual.

Natural Comfort is the refreshment of our natural Spirits by the good Creatures of God, Acts. 14. 17. *Filling their hearts with food and gladness.* *Sinful Comfort* is the satisfaction and

and pleasure men take in the fulfilling of their lusts, by the abuse of the creatures of God, James 5.5. *Ye have lived in pleasure upon earth,* (*i. e.*) your life hath been a life of sensuality and sin.

Spiritual Comfort is the refreshment, peace and joy gracious souls have in Christ, by the exercise of faith, hope, and other graces, *Rom.* 5. 2. and this only deserves the name of true solid Consolation: to which four things are required.

First, That the matter thereof be some *spiritual*, eminent and durable good: else our consolation in it, will be but as the crackling of Thorns under a Pot; a sudden blaze, quickly extinct with the failing matter: Christ only gives the matter of solid, durable Consolation: The righteousness of Christ, the pardon of sin, the favour of God, the hopes of glory, are the substantial materials of a Believers Consolation, *Rom.* 5. 2. *Mat.* 9. 2. *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. Things are as their foundations be.

Secondly, *Interest* and propriety in these comfortable things, is requisite to our consolation by them, Luke 1. 47. *My Spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour.* 'Tis no consolation to him that is hungry, to see a Feast; to him that is poor, to see a Treasure; if the one may not taste, or the other partake thereof.

Thirdly, *Knowledge*, and evidence of interest in some degree is requisite to actual consolation, though without it a man may be in the state of consolation: for that which appears not, is (in point of actual comfort) as if it were not.

Fourthly, In order hereunto the work of the Spirit upon our hearts is requisite, both to give, and clear our interest in Christ, and the promises: and both these ways he is the Comforter, *The fruit of the Spirit is joy*, *Gal.* 5. 22. And thus briefly of the nature of Consolation.

Secondly, Next I will shew you that Christ, and he only is matter of Consolation to Believers: which will demonstratively appear by this Argument. 2.

He that brings to their souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their souls all that is uncomfortable, must needs be the only consolation of Believers. *Argu.*

But Jesus Christ brings to their souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their souls all that is uncomfortable.

Therefore Christ only is the Consolation of Believers.

First, Jesus Christ brings whatsoever is comfortable to the souls of Believers. Is pardon comfortable to a person condemned? Nothing can be matter of greater comfort in this world. Why, this Christ brings to all Believers, Jer. 23. 6. *And this is the name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness:* this cannot but give strong consolation; righteousness is the foundation of peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 14. 17. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever,* Isai. 32. 17. Come to a dejected soul, labouring under the burthen of guilt, and say, Cheer up, I bring you good tidings; there is such an Estate befallen you, or such a troublesom business comfortably ended for you; alas! this will not reach the heart. If you can bring me (saith he) good news from Heaven, that my sins are forgiven, and God reconciled; how soon should I be comforted! And therefore (as one well observes) this was the usual receipt with which Christ cured the souls of men and women, when he was here on earth; Son, or Daughter, *be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee*: and indeed it is as easie to separate light and warmth from the beams of the Sun, as cheerines and comfort from the voice of pardon.

Are the hopes and expectation of Heaven and glory comfortable? Yes sure, nothing is comfortable if this be not, Rom. 5. 2. *We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.* Now, Christ brings to the souls of men all the solid grounds and foundations upon which they build their expectations of glory, Col. 1. 27. *Which is Christ, in you, the hope of glory.* Name any thing else that is solid matter of comfort to the souls of men, and the grounds thereof will be found in Christ, and in none but Christ; as might easily be demonstrated by the enumeration of multitudes of particular instances, which I cannot now insist upon.

Secondly, Jesus Christ removes fom Believers, whatever is uncomfortable; therein relieving them against all the matters of their affliction and sorrow. As namely,

First, Is sin a burthen, and matter of trouble to Believers? Christ, and none but Christ removes that burthen, Rom. 7. 24, 25. *O wretched man that I am,* (saith sin-burthened *Paul*) *who*

who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The satisfaction of his blood, *Eph.* 5. 2. The sanctification of his Spirit, *John* 1. 5, 6. His perfect deliverance of his people from the very being of sin at last, *Eph.* 5. 26, 27. This relieves at present, and removes at last the matter and ground of all their troubles and sorrows for sin.

Secondly, Do the temptations of Satan burthen Believers? O yes, by reason of temptations, they go in trouble, and heaviness of spirit. Temptation is an enemy under the walls, temptation greatly endangers, and therefore cannot but greatly afflict the souls of Believers; but Christ brings the only matter of relief against temptations. The intercession of Christ is a singular relief at present, Luke 22. 32. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* and the promises of Christ are a full relief for the future: *The God of peace shall shortly tread Satan under your feet,* Rom. 16. 20.

Thirdly, Is spiritual *desertion,* and the hiding of Gods face, matter of affliction, and casting down to Believers? Yes, yes, it quails their hearts, nothing can comfort them; *Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled,* Psal. 30. 7. Outward afflictions do but break the *skin,* this touches the *quick:* they like rain fall only upon the Tiles, this soaks into the House; but Christ brings to Believers substantial matter of Consolation against the troubles of desertion: he himself was deserted of God for a time, that they might not be deserted for ever: in him also the relieving promises are made to Believers, that notwithstanding God may desert them for a time, yet the union betwixt him and them shall never be dissolved, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Jer.* 32. 40. Though he forsake them for a moment, in respect of evidenced favour, yet he will return again and comfort them, *Isai.* 54. 7. Though Satan tug hard, yet he shall never be able to pluck them out of his Fathers hand, *John* 10. 20. Oh what relief is this! What consolation is Christ to a deserted Believer!

Fourthly, Are outward afflictions matter of dejection, and trouble? Alas, who finds them not to be so? How do our hearts fail, and our spirits sink under the many smarting rods of God upon us! but our relief and consolation under them all, is in Christ Jesus: for the rod that afflicts us is in the hand

of Christ that loveth us, Rev. 3. 19. *Whom I love I rebuke and chasten:* his design in affliction is our profit, *Heb.* 12. 10. That design of his for our good shall certainly be accomplished, *Rom.* 8. 28. and after that no more afflictions for ever, *Rev.* 21. 3, 4. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. So that upon the whole, two things are most evident.

First, Nothing can comfort the soul without Christ: he is the soul that animates all Comforts, they would be but dead things without him. Temporal enjoyments, riches, honours, health, relations, yield not a drop of true Comfort without Christ. Spiritual enjoyments, Minister, ordinances, promises, are fountains sealed, and springs shut up till Christ open them, a man may go comfortless in the midst of them all.

Secondly, No troubles, sorrows, or afflictions can deject, or sink the soul that Christ comforteth, 2 Cor. 6. 10. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing.* A Believer may walk with a heart brim full of comfort, amidst all the troubles of this world. Christ makes the darkness of trouble, to be light round about his people. So that the conclusion stands firm, and never to be shaken; that Christ, and Christ only is the Consolation of Believers: which was the thing to be proved.

3. In the Third place, I am to shew you, that Believers, and none but Believers can have consolation in Christ: which will convincingly appear from the consideration of those things which we laid down before, as the requisites to all true Spiritual Consolation. For,

First, No unbeliever hath the *materials* out of which Spiritual Comfort is made; which (as I there told you) must be some solid, spiritual and eternal good, as Christ and the Covenant are. What do unregenerate men rejoyce in, but trifles and meer vanities, in a thing of nought? *Amos* 6. 13. See how their mirth is described in Job 21. 12. *They take their Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ.* He doth not say, they take the *Bible*, turn to the promises, and rejoyce in Christ and the Covenant; 'tis not the melody of a good Conscience, the joy of the Holy Ghost: no, no, they have no acquaintance with such musick as that: but the rejoycing of Believers is in those things, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. And this is well-built consolation which reaches the heart.

Secondly,

Secondly, I told you that propriety, and intereſt in Chriſt, and the promiſes is required to all Spiritual Conſolation: but no unbeliever hath any title or intereſt in Chriſt, and the promiſes, and ſo they can ſignifie nothing to him in point of Comfort. 'Tis not another mans mony, but my own, that muſt feed, cloath and comfort me; nor is it another mans Chriſt, but my own Chriſt, that muſt juſtifie, ſave and comfort my ſoul.

Thirdly, You were told that evidence of a mans peace, and reconciliation with God, is neceſſary to his actual conſolation, which no unbeliever can poſſibly have; he hath neither grace within him, to make him a qualified ſubject of any ſpecial promiſe; nor any witneſs, or ſeal of the ſpirit to confirm and clear his propriety in Chriſt: for he never ſeals, but where he firſt ſanctifies. So that it is beyond all contradiction, that Believers, and none but Believers are partakers of the Conſolations that are in Chriſt Jeſus.

Fourthly, and Laſtly, There is one inquiry remains to be ſatisfied, namely, ſeeing Jeſus Chriſt is conſolation to Believers, how it comes to paſs that ſo many Believers in the world ſhould walk ſo dejectedly as they do without any Spiritual Conſolation.

Firſt, This may not be wondred at, if we conſider that the Conſolations of Chriſt are of two ſorts. *Seminal* and in preparation, or *actual* in preſent poſſeſſion. Every Believer in the world hath the root, and ſeed of comfort, planted and ſown for him, Pſal. 97. 11. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and gladneſs for the upright in heart.* They have Chriſt and the promiſes which are the ſeeds of Conſolation, and will bring forth joy at laſt, though at preſent they have no actual Conſolation; the ſeed of all joy is ſown, and in due time they ſhall reap the full ripe fruit thereof.

Secondly, It muſt be remembred that *intereſt* and *evidence* are diſtinct bleſſings, every Believer hath intereſt in Chriſt, but every Believer hath not the evidence thereof, Iſai. 50. 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkneſs and hath no light.* Every Child of God is not of ſufficient age to know his Father, or take comfort in that bleſſed inheritance whereunto he is begotten again, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Every Believer doth not walk with like strictness, and exact holiness, all do not exercise faith in a like degree: among Christians some are strong in grace, rich in faith, strict in obedience, tender of sin to an eminent degree, these usually are owners of much Consolation: but others are weak in grace, poor in faith, comparatively careless of their hearts and ways; frequently grieving the good Spirit of God, and wounding their own Consciences (the vessel into which Spiritual Consolation is poured) and these are usually denied the joy and comfort which others abound withal.

Fourthly, The Consolations of Christ are arbitrarily dispensed by the Spirit who is the Comforter, and giveth to every man in such proportions and seasons as pleaseth him; whence it comes to pass, that he that is rich in comfort to day, may be poor to morrow, and contrarily the heart that is brimful of sorrow one hour, is filled with peace and joy in believing the next. Things that are necessary to *the being* of a Christian are fixed and stable, but things belonging only to the *well-being* of a Christian come and go according to the good pleasure and appointment of the Spirit. The use of all follows.

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *Hence it follows, that the state of unbelievers is the most sad and uncomfortable state in the world: having no interest in Christ the Consolation of* Israel. 'Tis true, they abound in Creature-comforts, they live in pleasure upon earth. Joy displaies its colours in their faces: but for all this there is not the least drop of true Consolation in any of their hearts: they have some comfort in the Creature, but none in Christ: that little they gather from the Creature now, is all their portion of joy, Luke 6. 24. *Ye have received your consolation:* as this is all they have, so they shall enjoy it but a little while, *Job* 21. 13, 17. and while they do injoy it, it's mixt with many gripes of Conscience, Job 14. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness:* whatever consolation any unbeliever speaks of besides this, is but by rote; for when the day of his distress cometh, and the terrors of Conscience

Conſcience ſhall awake him out of his pleaſant dreams, all his ſenſual joys will vaniſh from him, and the dores of true Conſolation will be all ſhut againſt him. Let him go to Jeſus Chriſt, knock at that dore, and ſay, Lord Jeſus thy name is Conſolation, my heart is ready to burſt within me, haſt thou no Conſolation for me? O Lord for one drop of Spiritual Comfort now, but alas there is none, no not in Chriſt himſelf for any unbeliever. 'Tis Childrens bread; the Saints priviledge; comfort and grace are undivided: let him return into himſelf, ſearch his own Conſcience for comfort, and ſay, O Conſcience, thou art more than a thouſand witneſſes, and thouſands have been comforted by thee: where thou ſpeakeſt comfort, none can ſpeak trouble, haſt thou no Conſolation for me in my deepeſt diſtreſs? Alas, no, if God condemn thee, wherewithal ſhall I comfort thee? I can ſpeak neither more nor leſs than the Scriptures put into my mouth, and I find not one word in all the Book of God warranting me to be thy Comforter: believe it as an undoubted truth, (though the ſenſe of the bewitched world over-rules it) that the ſtate of unbelievers, even at the beſt, is a ſad and diſmal ſtate.

Inference 2.

Let all Believers fetch all their Comfort out of Chriſt, who is the Conſolation of his people: we rejoice (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* That's the true temper of a believing ſoul: Take heed you live not partly upon Chriſt, and partly upon the Creature for your Comfort; much rather beware that you forſake not Chriſt the fountain of living waters, and hew out Ciſterns for your ſelves which can hold no water, *Jer.* 2. 13. If you make any Creature the ſpring and fountain of your comfort, aſſuredly God will dry up that ſpring: if your ſouls draw their Comfort from any Creature, you know they muſt outlive that Creature, and what then will you do for Comfort? Beſide, as your Comforts are, ſo are you. The food of every Creature is ſuitable to its nature. You ſee divers Creatures feeding upon ſeveral parts of the ſame herb; the Bee upon the flower, the Bird upon the ſeed, the Sheep upon the ſtalk, *Inference* 2.

ſtalk, and the Swine upon the root; according to their nature, ſo is their food: ſenſual men feed upon ſenſual things: ſpiritual men upon ſpiritual things; as your food is, ſo are you. If carnal comforts can content thy heart, ſure thy heart muſt then be a very carnal heart: yea, and let Chriſtians themſelves take heed, that they fetch not their Conſolations out of themſelves inſtead of Chriſt. Your graces and duties are excellent means and inſtruments, but not the groundwork, and foundation of your Comfort: they are uſeful buckets to draw, but not the well it ſelf in which the ſprings of conſolation riſe. If you put your duties in the room of Chriſt, Chriſt will put your comforts out of the reach of your duties.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *If Chriſt be the Conſolation of Believers, what a comfortable life ſhould all Believers live in this world?* Certainly if the fault be not your own, you might live the happieſt and comfortableſt lives of all men in the world. If you would not be a diſcomfort to Chriſt, he would be a comfort to you every day, and in every condition to the end of your lives: your condition abounds with all the helps and advantages of conſolation: you have the command of Chriſt to warrant your comforts, *Phil.* 4. 4. You have the Spirit of Chriſt for a ſpring of comfort, you have the Scriptures of Chriſt for the rules of comfort: you have the duties of Religion for the means of comfort: why is it then that you go comfortleſs? If your afflictions be many in the world, yet your encouragements be more in Chriſt: your troubles in the world may be turned into joy, but your comforts in Chriſt can never be turned into trouble. Why ſhould troubles obſtruct your comfort, when the bleſſing of Chriſt upon your troubles makes them ſubſervient to promote your happineſs? *Rom.* 8. 28. Shake off deſpondency then, and live up to the principles of Religion: your dejected life is uncomfortable to your ſelves, and of very ill uſe to others.

Inference

Inference 4.

If Chriſt be the Conſolation of Believers, then let all that deſire comfort in this world, or in that to come, imbrace Jeſus Chriſt, and get real union with him. The ſame hour you ſhall be in Chriſt, you ſhall alſo be at the fountain head of all Conſolations. Thy ſoul ſhall be then a pardoned ſoul, and a pardoned ſoul hath all reaſon in the world to be a joyful ſoul: in that day thy Conſcience ſhall be ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, and a ſprinkled Conſcience hath all the reaſon in the world to be a comforting Conſcience: in that day you become the Children of your Father in Heaven; and he that hath a Father in Heaven, hath all reaſon to be the joyfulleſt man upon earth: in that day you are delivered from the ſting and hurt of death; and he that is delivered from the ſting of death, hath the beſt reaſon to take in the comfort of life. O come to Chriſt, come to Chriſt; till you come to Chriſt, no true comfort can come to you. *Inference* 4.

The Sixteenth SERMON.

Sermon 16.

Text. Enforcing the general exhortation by a ſeventh motive drawn from the firſt benefit purchaſed by Chriſt.

EPHES. 1. 7.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remiſſion of ſins, according to the riches of his grace.

SIx great *Motives* have been preſented already from the *Titles* of Chriſt, to draw the hearts of ſinners to him: more are now to be offered from the *benefits* redounding to Believers by Chriſt. Eſſaying by all means to win the hearts of men to Chriſt. To this end I ſhall in the firſt place open that glorious *priviledge* of *Goſpel remiſſion*; freely and fully conferred upon all that come to Chriſt by faith, *in whom we have redemption by faith*, &c.

In which words we have firſt a ſingular benefit, or choice mercy beſtowed, *viz. Redemption*; interpreted by way of *appoſition*, *the remiſſion of ſins*: this is a priviledge of the firſt rank, a mercy by it ſelf: none ſweeter, none more deſirable among all the benefits that come by Chriſt. And therefore,

Secondly,

Secondly, You have the price of this mercy, an account what it cost, even the *blood of Christ*; in whom we have redemption [through his blood] Precious things are of great price, the blood of Christ is the *meritorious cause* of remission.

Thirdly, You have here also the *impulsive cause*, moving God to grant pardons at this rate to sinners, and that is said to be the *riches of his grace*. Where by the way you see, that the *freeness* of the grace of God, and the *fulness* of the satisfaction of Christ meet together without the least jar in the remission of sin; contrary to the vain cavil of the *Socinian* adversaries, *In whom we have redemption, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

Fourthly, You have the *qualified subjects* of this blessed priviledge, *viz.* Believers, in whose name he here speaks [*we*] *have remission, (i.e.)* we the Saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus, *vers.* 1. *we* whom he hath chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated unto the adoption of Children, *vers.* 4, 5. *we* that are made accepted in the beloved, *vers.* 6. 'tis *we*, and *we* only who have redemption through his blood.

Hence observe,

DOCT.

That all Believers, and none but Believers, receive the remission of their sins through the riches of grace, by the blood of Jesus Christ. *Doct.*

In the explication of this point, three things must be spoken to.

1. That all that are in Christ are in a pardoned state.
2. That their pardon is the purchase of the blood of Christ.
3. That the riches of Grace are manifested in remission.

First, That all that are in Christ are in a pardoned state: where I will first shew you what pardon or the remission of sin is. 1.

Secondly, That this is the priviledge of none but Believers.

Firſt, Now remiſſion of ſin is the gracious act of God, in and through Chriſt, diſcharging a believing ſinner from all the guilt and puniſhment of his ſin, both temporal and eternal.

'Tis the act of God, he is the author of remiſſion, none can forgive ſins but God only, *Mark* 2. 7. againſt him only (*i.e.*) principally and eſſentially the offence is committed, *Pſal.* 51. 4. To his Judgement guilt binds over the ſoul, and who can remit the debt, but the *Creditor*, *Mat.* 6. 12.

'Tis an act of God *diſcharging* the ſinner: it is Gods looſing of one that ſtood bound, the cancelling of his bond, or obligation: called therefore remiſſion, or releaſing in the Text: the blotting out of our iniquities, or the removing our ſins from us, as it's called in other Scriptures, ſee *Pſal.* 103. 11. *Mica.* 7. 18, 19.

It is a gracious act of God, the effect of pure grace, done for his own name ſake, *Iſai.* 43. 25. diſcharging us without any ſatisfaction at all by us; there is much grace in that: and providing a ſurety for us every way able to pay our debt, there is more grace in that.

'Tis the gracious act of God in and through Chriſt: the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is the procuring cauſe of our remiſſion, and ſo God declares himſelf juſt in the remiſſion of our ſin, Rom. 3. 25. *Gracious is the Lord and righteous*, *Pſal.* 116. 5. Juſtice and mercy meet here, and embrace each other: *in whom* (ſaith the Text) *we have remiſſion*: no other price could purchaſe this priviledge, *Micah* 6. 6, 7. not rivers of Oyl, or humane Blood.

And this gracious act of God diſcharges the pardoned ſoul both from guilt and puniſhment: guilt is nothing elſe but the force and power that is in ſin, to oblige the ſinner to undergo the penalty due to ſin. Therefore ſinners are ſaid to be *guilty of Hell-fire*, *Mat.* 5. 22. *Guilty of eternal judgement*, *Mark* 3. 29. to be under the judgement of God, *Rom.* 3. 19. Remiſſion takes away both guilt and puniſhment together, it takes away all guilt, *Acts* 13. 38, 39. and all puniſhment. And ſo much of the firſt thing to be opened, namely what the remiſſion of ſin is.

Secondly,

Secondly, Now that this remiſſion of ſin is the priviledge of Believers is moſt apparent, for all the cauſes of remiſſion are in conjunction to procure it for them. The love of God which is the impulſive cauſe of pardon: the blood of Chriſt which is the meritorious cauſe of pardon; and ſaving faith which is the inſtrumental cauſe of pardon, do all cooperate for their remiſſion, as is plain in the Text.

Beſides, all the promiſes of pardon are made to them, *Jer.* 31.34. *Micah* 7.18. and Laſtly, All the ſigns of pardon are found in them, and in them only, that love God, *Luk.* 7.47. merciſulneſs to others, *Mat.* 6.14. a bleſſed calmneſs and peace in the Conſcience, *Rom.* 5. 1. So that it is a truth beyond controverſie, that all that are in Chriſt are in a pardoned ſtate.

Secondly, Next I will ſhew you, that the Pardon of Believers is the purchaſe of the blood of Chriſt: nothing but the blood of Chriſt is a price equivalent to the remiſſion of ſin, for this blood was innocent and untainted blood, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. the blood of a Lamb without ſpot. This blood was precious blood, blood of infinite worth and value, the blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. it was prepared blood for this very purpoſe, *Heb.* 10. 5. prepared by Gods eternal appointment: prepared by Chriſts miraculous and extraordinary production; by the operation of the Spirit: prepared by his voluntary ſequeſtration, or ſanctification of himſelf to this very uſe and purpoſe. 2.

The blood of Jeſus is not only innocent, precious and prepared blood, but it is alſo blood actually ſhed and ſacrificed to the juſtice of God, for the expiation of guilt, and procurement of our diſcharge, *Iſai.* 53. 5. To conclude, the ſevere juſtice of God could put in no exception againſt the blood of Chriſt, 'tis unexceptionable blood, being (as before was noted) untainted by ſin, and dignified above all eſtimation by the perſon whoſe blood it was. Juſtice required no leſs, and could demand no more: and this is the price at which our pardons are purchaſed: and without which no ſin could be pardoned, for *without ſhedding of blood* (ſuch blood as this) *there is no remiſſion*, Heb. 9. 22.

Thirdly, The laſt thing to be opened is, *That God hath manifeſted the riches of his grace in the remiſſion of our ſins:* ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, Rom. 5. 20. *Where ſin abounded grace did much* 3.

much more abound: And 1 Tim. 1. 14. *The grace of our Lord* (*viz.* in the pardon of ſin) *was exceeding abundant.* Which will appear (if we bring our thoughts cloſe to the matter) in ſeveral particulars.

Firſt, From the *nature* of the mercy, which is the richeſt of all mercies, except Chriſt, the purchaſer of it: no mercy ſweeter than a pardon to a condemned ſinner. No pardon like Gods pardon, to a man condemned at his Bar: all the goodneſs of God is made to paſs before our eyes in his pardoning acts of grace, *Exod.* 33. 19.

Secondly, The very riches of grace muſt needs be in the pardon of ſin, if we conſider the *method* in which pardons are diſpenſed, which is (as the Text ſpeaks) *through his blood.* Herein *God commends his love to us,* Rom. 5. 8. he commends it more, than if he had pardoned ſin without ſuch a ſacrifice, for then he had only diſplayed his mercy; but not cauſed Mercy and Juſtice to meet and triumph together.

Thirdly, The riches of his grace ſhines forth in the *peculiarity* of the mercy. Remiſſion is no common favour, it was never extended to the fallen *Angels,* nor to the far greater part of the children of men, but only to a little flock, a ſmall remnant of mankind, *Luke* 12. 32. *Joh.* 17. 9.

Fourthly, The riches of grace are manifeſted in remiſſion, if we conſider the *ſubjects* of this priviledge, who are not only equally plunged into ſin and miſery with others by nature, *Eph.* 2. 3. but many of the Lords pardoned ones are actually guilty of deeper-died abominations, than many unpardoned ones in the civilized world are defiled with. To me (ſaith *Paul*) the greateſt of ſinners, one that was before a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, *&c.* yet *to me is this grace given. I obtained mercy,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. *and ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are juſtified,* 1 Cor. 6. 11. Yea, God ſingles out the moſt baſe, deſpiſed, poor, and contemptible ones among men, to be the ſubjects of this glorious priviledge, 1 Cor. 1. 26. *You ſee your calling brethren,* &c.

Fifthly, More of the riches of grace ſtill appears if we view the *latitude* and extent of this act of grace. Oh how innumerable are our tranſgreſſions! *Who can underſtand his errors?* Pſal. 19. 12. *Yet the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin,* 1 Joh. 1. 7. Small and great ſins, open and ſecret ſins, old

and

and new ſins; all pardoned without exception. O the riches of grace! O the unſearchable goodneſs of God! *With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; and he ſhall redeem Iſrael from all his Iniquities*, Pſal. 130. 7, 8.

Sixthly, and laſtly, The riches of Grace ſhine forth in the *irrevocableneſs* and *perpetuity* of remiſſion: as grace pardons all ſins without *exception*, ſo the pardons it beſtows are without *revocation*. The pardoned ſoul ſhall *never come into condemnation*, Joh. 5. 24. *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us*, Pſal. 103. 10. The *Eaſt* and *Weſt* are the two oppoſite points of Heaven, which can never come together; neither ſhall the pardoned ſoul and its ſins ever meet any more. *Thou haſt caſt* (ſaith *Hezekiah*) *all my ſins behind thy back.* The penitent Believer ſets his ſins before his *face*, but the merciful God caſts them all behind his *back*, never to behold them more, ſo as to charge them upon his pardoned people. And thus you ſee, what the pardon of ſin is, what the price that purchaſeth pardon is; and what riches of grace God manifeſteth in the remiſſion of Believers ſins: which were the things to be explained and opened in the Doctrinal part. The improvement of the whole you will have in the following Uſes.

Inference 1.

If this be ſo that all Believers, and none but Believers receive the remiſſion of their ſins through the riches of grace, by the blood of Chriſt: *What a happy condition then are Believers in!* Thoſe that never felt the load of ſin, may make light of a pardon, but ſo cannot you that have been in the deeps of trouble and fear about it: thoſe that have been upon the rack of an accuſing and condemning Conſcience, as *David*, *Heman*, and many of the Saints have been, can never ſufficiently value a pardon. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered; bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity*, Pſal. 32. 1, 2. or, O the bleſſednеſſes and felicities of the pardoned man! as the *Hebrew* ſounds. Remiſſion cannot but appear the wonder of mercies, if we conſider through what difficulties the grace of God makes way for it to our ſouls; what ſtrong bars the love *Inference* 1. אַשְׁרֵי נְשׂוּי

love of God breaks aſunder, to open our way to this priviledge: for there can be no pardon without a *Mediator*: no other *Mediator* but the Son of God: the Son of God cannot diſcharge our debts but by taking them upon himſelf as our ſurety, and making full payment by bearing the wrath of God for us; and when all this is done, there can be no actual pardon, except the ſpirit of grace open our blind eyes, break our hard hearts, and draw them to Chriſt in the way of believing. And as the mercy of remiſſion comes to us through wonderful difficulties, ſo it is in it ſelf a compleat and perfect mercy. God would not be at ſuch vaſt expence of the riches of his grace, Chriſt would not lay out the invaluable treaſures of his precious blood to procure a cheap and common bleſſing for us. Rejoyce then ye pardoned ſouls, God hath done great things for you, for which you have cauſe to be glad.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. Hence it follows, *That intereſt in Chriſt by faith brings the Conſcience of a Believer into a ſtate of reſt and peace*, Rom. 5.1. *Being juſtified by faith we have peace with God.* I ſay not that every Believer is preſently brought into actual peace and tranquillity of Conſcience, there may be many fears, and much trouble even in a pardoned ſoul: but this is an undoubted truth, that faith brings the pardoned ſoul into that condition and ſtate where he may find perfect reſt in his Conſcience, with reſpect to the guilt and danger of ſin. The blood of Chriſt ſprinkles us from an evil (that is an accuſing, condemning) Conſcience. We are apt to fear, that this or that ſpecial ſin, which hath moſt terrified and affrighted our Conſciences, is not forgiven: but if there be riches enough in the grace of God, and efficacy enough in the blood of Chriſt; then the ſins of Believers, all their ſins, great as well as ſmall, one as well as another without limitation or exception are pardoned.

For let us but conſider, if God remits no ſin to any man, but with reſpect to the blood of Chriſt, then all ſins are pardoned as well as any one ſin; becauſe the dignity and deſert of that blood is infinite, and as much deſerves an univerſal pardon

don for all ſins, as the particular pardon of any, even the leaſt ſin. Moreover, remiſſion is an act of Gods Fatherly love in Chriſt, and if it be ſo, then certainly no ſin of any Believer can be retained or excluded from pardon: for then the ſame ſoul ſhould be in the favour of God ſo far as it is pardoned, and out of the favour of God, ſo far as it is unpardoned; and all this at one and the ſame inſtant of time, which is a thing both repugnant to it ſelf, and to the whole ſtream of the Goſpel.

To Conclude, what is the deſign and end of remiſſion, but the ſaving of the pardoned ſoul? But if any ſin be retained or excluded from pardon, the retaining of that ſin muſt needs irritate and void the pardon of all other ſins; and ſo the acts of God muſt croſs and contradict each other, and the deſign and end of God miſcarry and be loſt, which can never be. So then we conclude, faith brings the believing ſoul into a ſtate of reſt and peace.

Inference 3.

Hence it alſo follows, *That no remiſſion is to be expected by any ſoul without intereſt by faith in Jeſus Chriſt: no Chriſt no pardon, no faith no Chriſt.* Yet how apt are many poor deluded ſouls to expect pardon in that way where never any ſoul yet did, or ever can meet it? Some look for pardon from the abſolute mercy of God, without any regard to the blood of Chriſt, or their intereſt therein: we have ſinned, but God is merciful. Some expect remiſſion of ſin by vertue of their own duties, not Chriſts merits. I have ſinned but I will repent, reſtore, reform, and God will pardon: but little do ſuch men know how they therein diminiſh the evil of ſin, undervalue the juſtice of God, ſlight the blood of Chriſt, and put an undoing cheat upon their own ſouls for ever: to expect pardon from abſolute mercy, or our own duties, is to knock at the wrong dore, which God hath ſhut up to all the world, *Rom.* 3. 20. Whilſt theſe two principles abide firm, that the *price* of pardon is only in the *blood* of Chriſt, and the *benefit* of pardon only by the *application* of his blood to us; this muſt remain a ſure concluſion, that no remiſſion is to be expected by any ſoul without intereſt by faith in Jeſus Chriſt. Repen- *Inference* 3.

tance, restitution and reformation are excellent duties in their kind, and in their proper places; but they were never meant for saviours or satisfactions to God for sin.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *If the riches of grace be thus manifested in the pardon of sin, how vile an abuse is it of the grace of God to take the more liberty to sin, because grace abounds in the pardon of it!*

Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid, Rom. 6. 1, 2. Will no cheaper stuff than the grace of God serve to make a cloak for sin? O vile abuse of the most excellent thing in the whole world! did Christ shed his blood to *expiate* our guilt, and dare we make that a plea to *extenuate* our guilt? God forbid.

If it be intolerable ingratitude among men to requite good with evil, sure that sin must want a name bad enough to express it, which puts the greatest dishonour upon God for the greatest mercy that ever was given by God to the world: *there is mercy with thee* (saith the Psalmist) *that thou maist be feared*, not that thou maist be the more abused, *Psal.* 130. 4. Nay, let me say the *Devils* never sinned at this rate: they cannot abuse the pardoning grace of God, because such grace was never offered unto them. And certainly if the abuse of the common mercies of God, as meat and drink by gluttony and drunkenness, be an hainous sin, and highly provoking to God: then the abuse of the riches of his grace, and the precious blood of his Son must be out of measure sinful; and the greatest affront we can put upon the God of mercy.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. To Conclude, *If this be so, as ever you expect pardon and mercy from God, come to Christ in the way of faith; receive and embrace him now in the tenders of the Gospel.*

To drive home this great Exhortation, I beseech you, as in the bowels of Christ Jesus, and by all the regard and value you have for your own souls, let these following Considerations sink down into your hearts.

First,

Firſt, That all Chriſtleſs perſons are actually under the condemnation of God, John 3. 18. *He that believeth not is condemned already:* and it muſt needs be ſo, for every ſoul is concluded under the curſe of the Law, till Chriſt make him free, *John* 8. 36. Till we are in Chriſt, we are dead by Law, and when we believe unto juſtification, then we *paſs from death to life.* A blind miſtaken Conſcience may poſſibly acquit you, but aſſure your ſelves God condemns you.

Secondly, Conſider what a terrible thing it is to lye under the condemnation of God, the moſt terrible things in nature cannot ſhadow forth the miſery of ſuch a ſtate. Put all ſickneſſes, all poverty, all reproaches, the torments invented by all *Tyrants* into one Scale, and the condemnation of God into the other; and they will be all found lighter than a Feather. Condemnation is the ſentence of God, the great and terrible God: 'Tis a ſentence ſhutting you up to everlaſting wrath; 'tis a ſentence never to be reverſed, but by the application of Chriſt in the ſeaſon thereof. O ſouls, you cannot bear the wrath of God, you do not underſtand it if you think it tolerable: one drop of it upon your Conſciences now, is enough to diſtract you in the midſt of all the pleaſures and comforts of this world: yet all that are out of Chriſt are ſentenced to the fulneſs of Gods wrath for ever.

Thirdly, There is yet a poſſibility of eſcaping the wrath to come: a dore of hope opened to the worſt of ſinners: a day of grace is afforded to the Children of men, *Heb.* 3. 15. God declares himſelf unwilling that any ſhould periſh, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. O what a mercy is this! Who that is on this ſide Heaven or Hell fully underſtands the worth of it?

Fourthly, This dore of mercy will be ſhortly ſhut, *Luk.* 12. 25. God hath many ways to ſhut it: he ſometimes ſhuts it by withdrawing the means of grace, and removing the *Candleſticks*, a judgement at this time to be greatly feared. Sometimes ſhuts he it by withdrawing his Spirit and bleſſing from the means, whereby all Ordinances loſe their efficacy, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. But if he ſhut it not by removing the means of grace from you, certain it is, it will be ſhortly ſhut by your removal from all the means and opportunities by Salvation by death.

Fifthly, When once the dore of mercy is ſhut, you are gone beyond all the poſſibilities of pardon and ſalvation, for

evermore: the night is then come, in which no man can work, *John* 9. 4. All the golden ſeaſons you now enjoy will be irrecoverably gone out of your reach.

Sixthly, Pardons are now daily granted to others: ſome (and they once as far from mercy as you now are) are at this day reading their pardons with tears of joy dropping upon them. The world is full of the examples and inſtances of the riches of pardoning grace. And whatever is needful for you to do in the way of repentance, and faith to obtain your pardon; how eaſily ſhall it be done, if once the day of Gods power come upon you? *Pſal.* 110. 3. Oh therefore lift up your cries to Heaven, give the Lord no reſt, take no denial till he open the blind eye, break the ſtony heart, open and bow the ſtubborn will, effectually draw thy ſoul to Chriſt; and deliver thy pardon ſigned in his blood.

The Seventeenth SERMON.

Sermon 17.

EPHES. 1. 6.

To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Text.

Opening the eighth motive to come to Chriſt, drawn from the ſecond benefit purchaſed by Chriſt for Believers.

IN our laſt diſcourſe we opened to you the bleſſed priviledge of remiſſion of ſin from the following verſe; in this verſe lies another glorious priviledge, *viz.* the *acceptation* that Believers have with God through Jeſus Chriſt: both which compriſe (as the two main branches) our juſtification before God. In the words read (to omit many things that might be profitably obſerved from the method and dependance of the Apoſtles diſcourſe) three particulars are obſervable,

viz.
1. The Priviledge it ſelf.
2. The Meritorous Cauſe.
3. The ultimate end thereof.

First, The priviledge it ſelf, which is exceeding rich and ſweet in its own nature; *he hath made us accepted:* the word is 1.

is ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς he hath ingratiated us, or brought us into the grace, favour and acceptance of God the Father; endeared us to him, so that we find grace in his sight.

2. Secondly, The meritorious cause purchasing and procuring this benefit for us, noted in these words, ἐν τῷ ἠγαπημένῳ, *in the beloved*; which words are a *periphrasis* of Christ, who is here *emphatically* called *the Beloved*, the great favorite of Heaven, the delight of Gods soul, the prime object of his love: 'tis he that obtaineth this benefit for Believers: he is accepted for his own sake, and we for his.

3. Thirdly, The ultimate end and aim of conferring this benefit upon Believers: *to the praise of the glory of his grace:* or to the end that his grace might be made glorious in praises: there are riches of grace in this act of God, and the work and business of Believers, both in this world and in that to come, is to search and admire, aknowledge, and magnifie God for his abundant grace herein.

Hence the note is,

DOCT.

Doct. *That Jesus Christ hath purchased and procured special favour and acceptation with God for all that are in him.*

This point lies plain in Scripture, Ephes. 2. 13. *But now in Jesus Christ, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ,* ἐγγὺς ἐγενήθητε, made nigh, a term of endearedness: nothing is taken into the very bosom and embraces but what is very dear, precious and acceptable: and in *Rev.* 1. 5, 6. Believers are said to be made by Jesus Christ, *Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father,* (*i. e.*) dignified favourites, upon whom the special marks of honour are set by God.

In the opening of this point, three things must be doctrinally discussed and opened.

viz.
1. What the acceptation of our persons with God is.
2. How it appears that Believers are so accepted with God.
3. How Christ the beloved procures this benefit for Believers.

First,

First, What the acceptation of our persons with God is? To open which, we must remember, that there is a twofold *acceptance of persons* noted in Scripture. 1.

1. One is the sinful act of a corrupt man.
2. The other the gracious act of a merciful God.

First, accepting of persons is noted in Scripture as the sinful act of a corrupt man: a thing which God abhors: being the corruption and abuse of that power and authority which men have in judgement: overlooking the merit of the cause through sinful respect to the quality of the person, whose cause it is. So that the cause doth not commend the person, but the person the cause: this God every where brands in men, as a vile perverting of judgement, and utterly disclaims it himself, Gal. 2. 6. *God accepteth no mans person:* Rom. 2. 11. *There is no respect of persons with God.*

Secondly, There is also an accepting of persons, which is the gracious act of a merciful God; whereby he receives both the persons and duties of Believers into special grace and favour for Christs sake: and of this my Text speaks. In which act of favour three things are supposed or included.

First, It supposes an estate of alienation and enmity: those only are accepted into favour that were out of favour; and indeed so stood the case with us, Ephes. 2. 12, 13. *Ye were aliens and strangers, but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* So the Apostle *Peter*, in 1 Pet. 2. 10. *Which in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.* The fall made a fearful breach betwixt God and man. Sin like a thick cloud intercepted all the beams of divine favour from us: the satisfaction of Christ dissolves that cloud, Isai. 44. 22. *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins:* This dark cloud thus dissolved, the face of God shines forth again with chearful beams of favour and love upon all, who by faith are interested in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, It includes the removing of guilt from the persons of Believers, by the imputation of Christs righteousness to

to them, Rom. 5. 1, 2. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand:* for the face of God cannot shine upon the wicked: the person must be first made *righteous* before it can be made *accepted.*

Thirdly, It includes the offering up, or tendering of our persons and duties to God by Jesus Christ. Accepting implies presenting or tendring: Believers indeed do present themselves to God, *Rom.* 12. 1. but Christs presenting them makes their tender of themselves acceptable to the Lord, Col. 1. 22. *In the body of his flesh through death to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight.* Christ leads every Believer as it were by the hand, into the gracious presence of God; after this manner bespeaking acceptance for him. "Father, here is a poor soul that was born "in sin, hath lived in Rebellion against thee all his days; "he hath broken all thy laws, and deserved all thy wrath; "yet he is one of that number which thou gavest me before "the world was. I have made full payment by my blood for "all his sins. I have opened his eyes to see the sinfulness, and "misery of his condition: broken his heart for his rebellions "against thee: bowed his will in obedience unto thy will: "united him to my self by faith, as a living member of my "body. And now, Lord, since he is become mine by rege-"neration, let him be thine also by special acceptation: let "the same love with which thou lovest me, embrace him al-"so who is now become mine. And so much for the first particular, *viz.* what acceptation with God is.

2. Secondly, In the next place I must shew you how it appears that Believers are thus ingratiated or brought into the special favour of God by Jesus Christ. And this will be evidenced divers ways.

First, By the *Titles* of love and endearedness with which the Lord graceth and honoureth Believers, who are sometimes called *the houshold of God*, Ephes. 2. 19. the *friends of God*, Jam. 2. 23. the *dear Children of God*, Ephes. 5. 1. the *peculiar people of God*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *A Crown of Glory*, and a *Royal Diadem* in the hand of their God, *Isai.* 62. 3. the objects of his *delight* and *pleasure*, *Psal.* 147. 10, 11. Oh what tearms of endearedness doth God use towards his people! doth

Doth not all this speak them to be in special favour with him? Which of all these alone doth not signifie a person highly in favour with God?

Secondly, The gracious manner in which he treats them upon the throne of grace, to which he allows them to come with boldness, *Heb.* 4. 16. This also speaks them in the special favour of God: he allows them to come to him in prayer, with the liberty, confidence and filial boldness of children to a Father, Gal. 4. 6. *Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father:* the familiar voice of a dear child: yea, which is a wonderful dignation and condescension of the great God to poor worms of the earth, he saith, Isai. 45. 11. *Thus saith the Lord the holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me:* an expression so full of grace and special favour to Believers, that it needs great caution in reading and understanding such an high and astonishing expression: the meaning is, that God hath as it were subjected the works of his hands to the prayers of his Saints: and it is as if he had said, If my glory, and your necessity shall require it, do but ask me in prayer, and whatever my almighty power can do, I will do it for you: however let no favourite of Heaven forget the infinite distance betwixt himself and God. *Abraham* was a great favourite of Heaven, and was called *the friend of God*, yet see with what humility of spirit, and reverential awe he addresseth to God, Gen. 18. 27. *Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.* So that you see the Titles of favour above mentioned are no empty Titles.

Thirdly, Gods readiness to grant, as well as their liberty to ask speaks them the special favourites of God. The heart of God is so propense, and ready to grant the desires of Believers, that it is but ask and have, *Mat.* 7. 7. the dore of grace is opened at the knock of prayer: that is a favourite indeed to whom the King gives a blank to insert what request he will: *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you; ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you*, John 15. 7. Oh blessed liberty of the sons of God! *David* did but say, *Lord turn the Counsel of Ahitophel into foolishness*, and it was done

as ſoon as asked, 2 *Sam.* 15. 31. *Joſhua* did but ſay, *Thou Sun ſtand ſtill in Gibeon*: and a miraculous ſtop was preſently put to its ſwift motion in the Heavens: nay, which is wonderful to conſider, a prayer in the womb, yet unborn, I mean conceived in the heart, and not yet uttered by the lips of Believers, is often anticipated by the propenſeneſs of free grace, Iſai. 65. 24. *And it ſhall come to paſs that before they call I will anſwer, and whilſt they are yet ſpeaking I will hear.* The prayers of others are rejected as an abomination, *Prov.* 15. 8. God caſts them back into their faces, *Mal.* 2. 3. But free grace ſigns the petitions of the Saints more readily, than they are preſented: we have not that freedom to ask, that God hath to give: 'tis true, the anſwer of a Believers prayers may be a long time ſuſpended from his ſenſe and knowledge; but every prayer according to the will of God is preſently granted in Heaven, though for wiſe and holy ends they may be held in a doubtful ſuſpenſe about them upon earth.

Fourthly, The free diſcoveries of the ſecrets of Gods heart to Believers ſpeaks them to be his ſpecial favourites: men open not the counſels and ſecrets of their own hearts to enemies or ſtrangers, but to their moſt inward and intimate friends: *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*, Pſal. 25. 14. When God was about to deſtroy *Sodom*, he will do nothing in that work of judgement till he had acquainted *Abraham*, his friend, with his purpoſe therein, Gen. 18. 17. *And the Lord ſaid, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? for I know him*, &c. So when a *King* was to be elected for *Iſrael*, and the perſon whom God had choſen, was yet unknown to the people, God as it were whiſpered that ſecret unto *Samuel* the day before, 1 Sam. 9. 15. *Now the Lord had told Samuel in his ear a day before Saul came*: according to the manner of Princes with ſome ſpecial favourite.

Fifthly, The Lords receiving every ſmall thing that comes from them with grace and favour, when (mean while) he rejects the greateſt things offered by others, doth certainly beſpeak Believers the ſpecial favourites of God. There was but one good word in a whole ſentence from *Sarah*, and that very word is noted and commended by God, 1 Pet. 3. 6. *She called him*

him Lord. There were but some small beginnings or buddings of grace in young *Abijah*, and the Lord took special notice of it, 1 Kings 14. 12. *Because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.* Let this be an encouragement to young ones, in whom there are found any breathing desires after Christ: God will not reject them if any sincerity be found in them: a secret groan uttered to God in sincerity shall not be despised, *Rom.* 8. 26. The very bent of a Believers will when he hath no more to offer unto God is an acceptable present, 2 *Cor.* 8. 11. The very intent and purpose that lies secretly in the heart of a Believer, not yet executed, is accepted with him, 1 Kings 8. 18. *Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house to my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart.* Thus small things offered to God by Believers find acceptance with him, whilst the greatest presents, even solemn assemblies, Sabbaths and prayers from others are rejected: *They are a trouble unto me* (saith God) *I am weary to bear them*, Isai. 1. 14, 15. Incense from *Sheba*, the sweet Cane from a far Country are not acceptable, nor sacrifices sweet unto God from other hands, *Jer.* 6. 20. From all which it appears beyond doubt, that the persons and duties of Believers are accepted into the special favour of God by Jesus Christ: which was the second thing to be spoken to, and brings us to the third general, *viz.*

Thirdly, How Christ the Beloved procures this benefit for Believers? And this he doth four ways. 3.

First, By *the satisfaction of his blood*, Rom. 5. 10. *When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* No friendship without reconciliation, no reconciliation but by the blood of Christ: therefore the new and living way by which Believers come unto God with acceptance, is said to be consecrated for us through the veil of Christs flesh, and hence believers have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20.

Secondly, The favour of God is procured for Believers, *by their mystical union with Christ*, whereby they are made *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*, Eph. 5. 30. So that look as *Adams* posterity stood upon the same terms that he their natural head did; so Believers Christs mystical members stand in the favour of God, by the favour which

Chriſt their ſpiritual head hath, John 17. 33. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me.*

Thirdly, Believers are brought into favour with God *by Chriſts becoming their Altar*, upon which their perſons and duties are all offered up to God: the Altar ſanctifies the gift, *Heb.* 13. 10. And this was typified by that legal rite mentioned, *Luke* 1. 9, 10. Chriſt is that golden Altar from whence all the prayers of the Saints aſcend to the throne of God, perfumed with the odours and incenſe of his merits, Rev. 8. 34. *And another Angel came and ſtood at the Altar, having a golden Cenſer, and there was given unto him much incenſe that he ſhould offer it, with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne; and the ſmoak of the incenſe which came with the prayers of the Saints aſcended up before God, out of the Angels hand.* And thus you ſee how the perſons and duties of Believers are brought into favour and acceptance with God by Jeſus Chriſt. The Uſes follow.

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *If all Believers be in favour with God, how great a mercy is it to have the prayers of ſuch ingaged on our behalf?* Would we have our buſineſs ſpeed in Heaven, let us get into favour with God our ſelves, and engage the prayers of his people, the favourites of Heaven, for us: *vis unita fortior*, one Believer can do much, many can do more: when *Daniel* deſigned to get the knowledge of that ſecret hinted in the obſcure dream of the King, which none but the God of Heaven could make known, it's ſaid, Dan. 2. 17. *Then Daniel went to his Houſe, and made the thing known to Hanania, Miſhael and Azaria his Companions; that they would deſire mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this ſecret.* The benefit of ſuch aſſiſtance in prayer by the help of other favourites with God, is plainly intimated by Jeſus Chriſt unto us, Mat. 18. 19. *If two of you ſhall agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.* God ſometimes ſtands upon a number of voices, for the carrying of ſome publick mercy; becauſe he delighteth in the harmony

ny of many praying ſouls, and alſo loves to oblige and gratifie many in the anſwer and return of the ſame prayer. I know this uſage is grown too formal and complemental among Profeſſors: but certainly it is a great advantage to be inward with them, who are ſo with God. St. *Bernard* preſcribing rules for effectual prayer, cloſes them up with this wiſh, *& cum talis fueris, memento mei*, when thy heart is in this frame, then remember me.

Inference 2.

If Believers be ſuch favourites in Heaven, in what a deſperate condition is that Cauſe, and thoſe Perſons againſt whom the generality of Believers are daily engaged in prayers and cries to Heaven? Inference 2.

Certainly *Rome* ſhall feel the dint and force of the many millions of prayers that are gone up to Heaven from the Saints for many generations: the cries of the blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus, joyned with the cries of thouſands of Believers will bring down vengeance at laſt upon the Man of ſin. 'Tis ſaid, Rev. 8. 4, 5, 6. *That the ſmoak of the incenſe which came with the prayers of the Saints, aſcended up before God out of the Angels hand:* and immediately it is added, verſ. 5. *And the Angel took the Cenſer, and filled it with fire of the Altar, and caſt it into the earth, and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and earth-quakes, and the ſeven Angels, which had the ſeven Trumpets, prepared themſelves to ſound.* The prayer of a ſingle Saint is ſometimes followed with wonderful effects, Pſal. 18. 6, 7. *In my diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God: he heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him even into his ears: then the earth ſhook and trembled; the foundations alſo of the hills moved, and were ſhaken becauſe he was wroth:* what then can a thundring legion of ſuch praying ſouls do! It was ſaid of *Luther*, *iſte vir potuit cum Deo quicquid voluit*, that man could have of God what he would, his enemies felt the weight of his prayers, and the Church of God reaped the benefits thereof. The *Queen of Scots* profeſſed ſhe was more afraid of the Prayers of Mr. *Knox*, than of an army of ten thouſand men: theſe were mighty wreſtlers with God, howſoever

soever contemned and vilified among their enemies. There will a time come when God will hear the prayers of his people, who are continually crying in his ears, How long Lord, how long.

Jacobus Lanigius, the *Sorbone* Doctor, who wrote the lives of *Luther*, *Knox* and *Calvin*, speaks as if the Devil had hired his pen to abuse those precious servants of Christ.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *Let no Believer be dejected at the contempts and slightings of men, so long as they stand in the grace and favour of God:* it is the lot of the best men to have the worst usage in this world: those of whom the world was not worthy, are not thought worthy to live in the world, *Heb.* 11. 38. *Paul* and his Companions were men of choice and excellent spirits, yet saith he, 1 Cor 4. 13. *Being defamed we intreat, we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day:* they are words signifying the basest, contemptiblest and most abhorred things among men. How is Heaven and Earth divided in their Judgements and estimations of the Saints! those whom men call filth and dirt, God calls a peculiar Treasure, a Crown of Glory, a Royal Diadem. But trouble not thy self Believer for the unjust censures of the blind world, they speak evil of the things they know not: *he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. You can discern the earthlines and baseness of their spirits, they want a faculty to discern the excellency and choiceness of your spirits. He that carries a dark Lanthorn in the night, can discern him that comes against him, and yet is not discerned by him: a *Courtier* regards not a slight in the Country, so long as he hath the ear and favour of his Prince.

Περι-ψημα πάντων (*i.e*) the sweepings of the house: the filth wiped off any thing: *Erasmus*, the dirt that sticks to the Shoos: *Valla*, the dung of the Belly as the Syriack translates. The condemned man that was tumbled from a steep Rock into the Sea, as a sacrifice to *Neptune*, was called περίψημα, saith *Budeus*. *Sit pro nobis peripsema.*

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *Never let Believers fear the want of any good thing necessary for them in this world:* the favour of God is the fountain of all blessings, provisions, protections, even of all that you need. He hath promised that he will withhold no good thing from them

them that walk uprightly, *Psal.* 84. 11. He that is bountiful to his enemies will not withhold what is good from his friends. The favour of God will not only supply your needs, but protect your persons, Psal. 5. 12. *Thou wilt bless the righteous, with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*

Inference 5.

Hence also it follows, that the sins of Believers are very piercing things to the heart of God. The unkindness of those whom he hath received into his very bosom, upon whom he hath set his special favour and delight, who are more obliged to him than all the people of the earth beside, O this wounds the very heart of God. What a melting expostulation was that which the Lord used with *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8. *I anointed thee King over all Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy masters house, and thy masters wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and Juda; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things: wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord?* But Reader, if thou be a reconciled person, a favourite with God, and hast grieved him by any eminent transgression, how should it melt thy heart to hear the Lord thus expostulating with thee: I delivered thee out of the hand of Satan: I gave thee into the bosom of Christ: I have pardoned unto thee millions of sins, I have bestowed upon thee the riches of mercy: my favour hath made thee great; and as if all this were too little, I have prepared Heaven for thee: for which of all these favours dost thou thus requite me? *Inference* 5.

Inference 6.

How precious should Jesus Christ be to Believers, by whose blood they are ingratiated with God, and by whose intercession they are and shall for ever be continued in his favour? When the Apostle mentions the Believers translation from the sad state of nature to the blessed priviledged state of grace, see what a Title he bestows upon Jesus Christ the purchaser of that priviledge, calling him the *dear Son*, *Col.* 1. 13. *Inference* 6.

not

not only dear to God, but exceeding dear to Believers also. Christ is the favourite in Heaven, to him you owe all your preferment there: take away Christ, and you have no ground to stand one minute in the favour of God. O then let Jesus Christ the fountain of your honour be also the object of your love and praise.

Inference 7.

Inference 7. *Estimate by this the state and condition of a deserted Saint upon whom the favour of God is eclipsed.* If the favour of God be better than life, the hiding of it from a gracious soul must be more bitter than death: deserted Saints have reason to take the first place among all the mourners in the world: the darkness before conversion had indeed more of danger, but this hath more of trouble. Darkness after light is dismal darkness. Since therefore the case is so sad, let your preventing care be the more: grieve not the good Spirit of God, you prepare but for your own grief in so doing.

Inference 8.

Inference 8. Lastly, *Let this perswade all men to accept Jesus Christ, as ever they expect to be accepted with the Lord themselves.* It is a fearful case for a mans person and duties to be rejected of God: to cry and not be heard: and much more terrible to be denied audience in the great and terrible day. Yet as sure as the Scriptures are the sealed and faithful sayings of God, this is no more than what every Christless person must expect in that day, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Luke* 13. 26. Trace the history of all times, even as high as *Abel*, and you shall find that none but Believers did ever find acceptance with God: all experience confirms this great truth, that *they that are in the flesh cannot please God.* Reader, if this be thy condition let me beg thee to ponder the misery of it in a few sad thoughts.

Si voluntatem Dei nosse quisquam desiderat, fit amicus Deo, August.

Consider how sad it is to be rejected of God, and forsaken by all creatures at once: what a day of streights thy dying day is like to be, when Heaven and Earth shall cast thee

thee out together. Be assured whatever thy vain hopes for the present quiet thee withal, this must be thy case, the dore of mercy will be shut against thee, no man cometh to the Father but by Christ. Sad was the case of *Saul* when he told *Samuel*, the *Philistins* make war against me, and God is departed from me, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. The Saints will have boldness in the day of Judgment, 1 *John* 4. 17. but thou wilt be a confounded man; there is yet, blessed be the God of mercy, a capacity and opportunity of reconciliation, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. *Isai.* 27. 5. But this can be of no long continuance. O therefore by all the regard and love you have for the everlasting welfare of your own souls, come to Christ, embrace Christ in the offers of the Gospel, that you may be made accepted in the beloved.

The Eighteenth SERMON.

Sermon 18.

Text. The liberty of Believers opened, and stated.

JOHN 8.36.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

FRom the 30*th verse* of this Chapter unto my Text, you have an account of the different effects which the words of Christ had upon the hearts of his hearers: some believed, *verse* 30. these he encourageth to continue in his word, *verse* 31. giving them this encouragement, vers. 32. *Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* Hereat the unbelieving Jews take offence, and commence a quarrel with him, vers. 33. *We be Abrahams seed, and were never in bondage to any man.* We are of no slavish extraction, the blood of *Abraham* runs in our veins: this scornful boast of the proud Jews, Christ confutes, *vers.* 34. where he distinguisheth of a twofold bondage; one to men, another to sin; one civil, another spiritual: whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin, then tells them, vers. 36. *The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.* Wherein he intimateth two

two great truths, *viz.* that the ſervants and ſlaves of ſin may for a time enjoy the external priviledges of the houſe or Church of God; but it would not be long before the maſter of the houſe will turn them out of dore: but if they were once the adopted Children of God, then they ſhould abide in the houſe for ever. And this priviledge is only to be had by their believing in, and union with the natural Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt: which brings us fairly to the Text; *If the Son therefore ſhall make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.*

In which words we have two parts.

viz. { 1. A Suppoſition. 2. A Conceſſion.

First, A *Suppoſition, if the Son therefore ſhall make you free,* *q. d.* The womb of nature caſt you forth into the world in a ſtate of bondage, in that ſtate you have lived all your days, ſervants to ſin, ſlaves to your luſts, yet freedom is to be obtained: and this freedom is the prerogative belonging to the Son of God to beſtow: *if the Son ſhall make you free.* 1.

Secondly, Chriſts Conceſſion upon this ſuppoſition, *then ſhall ye be free indeed,* (*i. e.*) you ſhall have a real freedom, an excellent and everlaſting fredom: no conceit only, as that which you now boaſt of is: if ever therefore you will be free men indeed, believe in me. Hence note, 2.

DOCT.

That intereſt in Chriſt ſets the ſoul at liberty from all that bondage whereunto it was ſubjected in its natural ſtate. *Doct.*

Believers are the Children of the New Covenant, the denizons of *Jeruſalem* which are above, which is free and the mother of them all, *Gal.* 4. 26. the glorious liberty, *viz.* that which is ſpiritual and eternal, is the liberty of the Children of God, *Rom.* 8. 21. Chriſt, and none but Chriſt delivers his people out of the hands of their enemies, *Luk.* 1. 74.

In the Doctrinal part of this point, I must shew you

- First, What Believers are not freed from by Jesus Christ in this world.
- Secondly, What that bondage is from which every Believer is freed by Christ.
- Thirdly, What kind of freedom that is which comes in upon believing.
- Fourthly, Open the excellency of this state of spiritual freedom.

1. First, What those things are from which Believers are not made free in this world: we must not think that our spiritual liberty by Christ presently brings us into an absolute liberty in all respects. For,

First, Christ doth not free Believers from obedience to the moral Law: 'Tis true we are no more under it as a *Covenant* for our *justification*; but we are, and must still be under it as a *rule* for our *direction*. The matter of the moral law is unchangeable as the nature of good and evil is, and cannot be abolished except that distinction could be destroyed, *Mat.* 5. 17, 18. The precepts of the Law are still urged under the Gospel to enforce duties upon us, *Eph.* 6. 12. 'Tis therefore a vain distinction invented by *Libertines* to say it binds us as *Creatures* not as *Christians:* or that it binds the unregenerate part, but not the regenerate: but this is a sure truth, that they who are freed from its *penalties*, are still under its *precepts:* though Believers are no more under its *curse*, yet they are still under its *conduct:* the Law sends us to Christ to be *justified*, and Christ sends us to the Law to be *regulated*. Let the heart of every Christian joyn therefore with *Davids* in that holy wish, Psal. 119. 4, 5. *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently, O that my heart were directed to keep thy Statutes.* 'Tis excellent when Christians begin to obey the Law *from* life, which others obey *for* life: because they are justified, not that they may be justified. When duties are done in the strength and for the honour of Christ, which is Evangelical; not in our own strength and for our own ends, which is servile and legal obedience:

had

had Chriſt freed us from obedience, ſuch a liberty had been to our loſs.

Secondly, Chriſt hath not freed Believers in this world from the temptations and aſſaults of Satan: even thoſe that are freed from his *dominion*, are not free from his *moleſtation*. 'Tis ſaid indeed, Rom. 16. 20. *God ſhall ſhortly bruiſe Satan under your feet:* but mean time he hath power to bruiſe and buffet us by his injections, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. he now bruiſeth Chriſts heel, *Gen.* 3. 15. (*i. e.*) bruiſeth him in his tempted and afflicted members: though he cannot kill them, yet he can and doth afflict and fright them, by ſhooting his fiery darts of temptation among them, *Eph.* 6. 16. 'Tis true, when the Saints are got ſafe into Heaven, they are out of Gunſhot; there is perfect freedom from all temptation. A Believer may then ſay, O thou enemy, temptations are come to a perpetual end. I am now arrived there, where none of thy fiery darts can reach me: but this freedom is not yet.

Thirdly, Chriſt hath not yet freed Believers in this world from the motions of indwelling ſin: theſe are continually acting and infeſting the holieſt of men, *Rom.* 7. 21, 23, 24. Corruptions like *Canaanites* are ſtill left in the Land to be thorns in our eyes, and goads in our ſides. Thoſe that boaſt moſt of freedom from the motions of ſin, have moſt cauſe to ſuſpect themſelves ſtill under the dominion of ſin. All Chriſts freemen are troubled with the ſame complaint: who among them complains not as the Apoſtle did, Rom. 7. 24. *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliever me from the body of this death?*

Fourthly, Jeſus Chriſt doth not free Believers in this world from inward troubles and exerciſes of ſoul upon the account of ſin. God may let looſe Satan and Conſcience too, in the way of terrible accuſations, which may greatly diſtreſs the ſoul of a Believer, and wofully eclipſe the light of Gods Countenance, and break the peace of their ſouls. *Job*, *Heman* and *David* were all made free by Chriſt, yet each of them hath left upon record his bitter complaint upon this account, *Job* 7. 19, 20. *Pſal.* 88. 14, 15, 16. *Pſal.* 38. unto *verſ.* 11.

Fifthly, Chriſt hath not freed Believers in this world from the rods of affliction. God in giving us our liberty doth not abridge his own liberty, *Pſal.* 89. 32. all the Children of God,

God are made free, yet what Son is there whom the Father chastneth not? *Heb.* 12. 8. Exemption from affliction is so far from being the mark of a Freeman, that the Apostle there makes it the mark of a slave. Bastards, not Sons want the discipline and blessing of the Rod: to be freed from affliction would be no benefit to Believers, who receive so many benefits by affliction.

Sixthly, No Believer is freed by Christ from the *stroak* of death, though they are all freed from the *sting* of death, *Rom.* 8. 10. The bodies of Believers are under the same Law of mortality with other men, *Heb.* 9. 27. we must come to the Grave as well as others: yea, we must come to it through the same agonies, pangs and dolours that other men do: the foot of death treads as heavy upon the bodies of the redeemed as of other men. Believers indeed are distinguished by mercy from others, but the distinguishing mercy lies not here. Thus you see what Believers are not freed from in this world: if you shall now say, what advantage then hath a Believer, or what profit is there in regeneration? I Answer,

2. Secondly, That Believers are freed from many great and sad miseries and evils by Jesus Christ notwithstanding all that hath been said. For,

First, All Believers are freed from the *rigour* and *curse* of the Law: the rigorous yoak of the Law is broken off from their necks, and the sweet and easie yoak of Jesus Christ put on, *Mat.* 11. 28. The Law required perfect working under the pain of a curse, *Gal.* 3. 10. accepted of no short endeavours; admitted no repentance; gave no strength: it is not so now, proportionable strength is given, *Phil* 4. 13. Sincerity is reckoned perfection, *Job* 1. 1. Transgression brings not under condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. O blessed freedom! when duty becomes delight, and failings hinder not acceptance: this is one part of the blessed freedom of believers.

Secondly, All Believers are freed from the guilt of sin, it may *trouble*, but it cannot *condemn* them, *Rom.* 8. 33. The hand-writing which was against us is cancelled by Christ, nailed to his Cross, *Colos.* 2. 14. When the seal and hand-writing is torn off from the Bond, the Debtor is made free thereby:

thereby: Believers are totally freed, Acts 13. 39. *Juſtified from all things:* and finally freed, John 5. 24. *They ſhall never come into condemnation.* O bleſſed freedom! How ſweet is it to lie down in our beds, yea in our graves; when guilt ſhall neither be our Bed fellow, nor Grave-fellow!

Thirdly, Chriſt frees all Believers from the *dominion* as well as the guilt of ſin. *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace,* Rom. 6. 14. *The law of the ſpirit of life which is in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the law of ſin and death,* Rom. 8. 2. Now who can eſtimate ſuch a liberty as this? What ſlavery, what an intolerable drudgery is the ſervice of divers luſts! from all which Believers are freed by Chriſt: not from the *reſidence* but from the *reign* of ſin. 'Tis with ſin in Believers as it was with thoſe beaſts mentioned Dan. 7. 12. *They had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a ſeaſon and time.*

Fourthly, Jeſus Chriſt ſets all Believers free from the power of Satan; in whoſe right they were by nature, *Col.* 1. 13. they are tranſlated from the power of darkneſs into the Kingdom of Chriſt. Satan had the poſſeſſion of them, as a man of his own goods; but Chriſt diſpoſſeſſeth that ſtrong man armed, alters the property, and recovers them out of his hand, *Luke* 11. 21, 22. There are two ways by which Chriſt frees Believers out of Satans power and poſſeſſion, namely,

1. By Price.
2. By Power.

Firſt, By *Price*, the blood of Chriſt purchaſeth Believers out of the hand of juſtice by ſatisfying the law for them, which being done, Satans authority over them falls of courſe, as the power of a Jaylor over the Priſoner doth, when he hath a legal diſcharge, Heb. 2. 14. *For as much then as the Children are partakers of fleſh and blood: he alſo himſelf took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil.* The cruel Tyrant beats and burthens the poor captive no more after the ranſom is once paid, and he actually freed, and therefore Chriſt delivers his,

Secondly,

Secondly, By *power*. Satan is exceeding unwilling to let go his prey: he is a ſtrong and a malicious enemy: every reſcue and deliverance out of his hand, is a glorious effect of the almighty power of Chriſt, *Act.* 26. 18. 2 *Cor.* 10. 5. How did our Lord Jeſus Chriſt grapple with Satan at his death, and triumphed over him, *Col.* 2. 15. O glorious ſalvation, bleſſed liberty of the Children of God!

Fifthly, Chriſt frees Believers from the poiſonous ſting and hurt of death: kill us it can, but hurt us it cannot, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. *O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the Law: but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* If there be no hurt, there ſhould be no horror in death: 'tis guilt that arms death both with its hurting and terrifying power. To dye in our ſins, *John* 8. 24. To have our bones full of the ſins of our youth, which ſhall lye down with us in the duſt, *Job* 20. 11. To have death, like a Dragon, pulling a poor guilty Creature as a prey into its dreadful Den, *Pſal.* 49. 14. In this lies the danger and horror of death: but from death as a curſe, and from the grave as a Priſon, Chriſt hath ſet Believers at liberty, by ſubmitting to death in their room, by his victorious reſurrection from the grave, as the firſt-born of the dead: death is diſarmed of its hurting power: the death of Believers is but a ſleep in Jeſus.

3. Thirdly, The next thing to be briefly ſpoken to, is the kind and nature of that freedom and liberty purchaſed and procured by Chriſt for Believers.

Now liberty may be conſidered two ways.

viz. { 1. As Civil. 2. As Sacred.

As to civil freedom or liberty, it belongs not to our preſent buſineſs: Believers as to their civil capacity are not freed from the duties they owe to their Superiors. Servants, though Believers, are ſtill to be ſubject to their Maſters according to the fleſh with fear and trembling, *Epheſ.* 6. 5. nor from obedience to lawful Magiſtrates whom we are to obey in the Lord,

Lord, *Rom.* 13. 1, 4. Religion diſſolves not the bonds of civil relations: nor is it to be uſed as an occaſion to the fleſh, *1 Pet.* 2. 16. 'Tis not a carnal but a ſpiritual freedom Chriſt hath purchaſed for us: and this ſpiritual freedom is again to be conſidered, either

as { 1. Inchoate. 2. Conſummate.

The liberty Believers have at preſent is but a beginning liberty, they are freed but in part from their ſpiritual enemies: but it is a growing liberty every day, and will be conſummate, and compleat at laſt.

To conclude, Chriſtian Liberty is,

either { 1. Privative, or, 2. Poſitive.

The liberty Believers are inveſted with, is of both kinds: they are not only freed from many miſeries, burthens and dangers; but alſo inveſted by Jeſus Chriſt with many royal priviledges and invaluable immunities.

Fourthly, And this brings us to the fourth and laſt thing; namely the properties of this bleſſed freedom which the Saints enjoy by Jeſus Chriſt: and if we conſider it duly it will be found to be, 4.

Firſt, A wonderful liberty, never enough to be admired: how could it be imagined that ever thoſe who owed unto God more than ever they could pay by their own eternal ſufferings, thoſe that were under the dreadful curſe and condemnation of the Law, in the power and poſſeſſion of Satan the ſtrong man armed; thoſe that were bound with ſo many chains in their ſpiritual priſon; their underſtanding bound with ignorance, their wills with obſtinacy, their hearts with impenetrable hardneſs, their affections with a thouſand bewitching vanities; that ſlight their ſtate of ſlavery ſo much as induſtriouſly to oppoſe all inſtruments and means of deliverance: For ſuch perſons to be ſet at liberty, notwith-

ſtanding all this, is the wonder of wonders, and is deſervedly marvellous in the eyes of Believers for ever.

Secondly, The freedom of Believers is a peculiar freedom: a liberty which few obtain, the generality abiding ſtill in bondage to Satan, who from the multitude of his Subjects is ſtiled *the god of this world*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Believers in Scripture are often called a remnant, which is but a ſmall part of the whole piece: the more cauſe have the people of God to admire diſtinguiſhing mercy: how many Nobles and great ones of the world are but royal ſlaves to Satan and their own luſts!

Thirdly, The liberty of Believers is a liberty dearly purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt: what that Captain ſaid, Acts 22. 28. *With a great ſum obtained I this freedom*, may be much more ſaid of the Believers freedom: 'twas not Silver or Gold but the precious blood of Chriſt that purchaſed it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18.

Fourthly, The freedom and liberty of Believers is a growing and encreaſing liberty, they get more and more out of the power of ſin, and nearer ſtill to their compleat ſalvation every day, *Rom.* 13. 11. the body of ſin dieth daily in them: they are ſaid to be crucified with Chriſt: the ſtrength of ſin abates continually in them after the manner of crucified perſons: who dye a ſlow but ſure death: and look in what degree the power of ſin abates, proportionably their ſpiritual liberty encreaſes upon them.

Fifthly, The freedom of Believers is a comfortable freedom: the Apoſtle comforts Chriſtians of the loweſt rank, poor ſervants, with this conſideration, 1 Cor. 7. 22. *He that is called in the Lord, being a ſervant, is the Lords freeman*, *q. d.* Let not the meanneſs of your outward condition, which is a ſtate of ſubjection and dependance, a ſtate of poverty and contempt, at all trouble you: you are the Lords freemen, of precious account in his eyes. O 'tis a comfortable liberty!

Sixthly, and Laſtly, 'Tis a perpetual and final freedom, they that are once freed by Chriſt have their manumiſſions and final diſcharge from that ſtate of bondage they were in before. Sin ſhall never have dominion over them any more: it may tempt them and trouble them, but ſhall never more rule

rule and govern them, *Acts* 26. 18. And thus you see what a glorious liberty the liberty of Believers is.

The improvement whereof will be in the following Inferences.

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *How rational is the joy of Christians, above the joy of all others in the world?* shall not the captive rejoyce in his recovered liberty? The very Birds of the air (as one observes) had rather be at liberty in the woods, though lean and hungry, than in a golden Cage with the richest fare: every creature naturally prises it, none more than Believers, who have felt the burthen and bondage of corruption: who in the days of their first illumination and conviction have poured out many groans and tears for this mercy. What was said of the captive people of God in *Babylon*, excellently shadows forth the state of Gods people under spiritual bondage, with the way and manner of their deliverance from it, *Zech.* 9. 11. *By the blood of thy Covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water.* Believers are delivered by the blood of Christ out of a worse pit than that of *Babylon:* and look as the Tribes in their return from thence were overwhelmed with joy and astonishment, Psal. 126. 1, 2. *When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion; we were like them that dream, then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing:* they were overwhelmed with the sense of the mercy: so should it be with the people of God. 'Tis said, *Luke* 15. 24. when the Prodigal Son (there made the emblem of a returning converting sinner) was returned again to his Fathers house; that there was heard musick and dancing, mirth and feasting in that house. The Angels in Heaven rejoice when a soul is recovered out of the power of Satan: and shall not the recovered soul, immediately concerned in the mercy, greatly rejoyce? Yea, let them rejoyce in the Lord, and let no earthly trouble or affliction ever have power to interrupt their joy for a moment after such a deliverance as this.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. *How unreasonable, and wholly inexcusable is the sin of Apostasie from Jesus Christ?* What is it but for a delivered captive to put his feet again into the shackles, his hands into the manacles, his neck into the iron yoke, from which he hath been delivered? 'Tis said, Mat. 12. 44, 45. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and findeth none: then he saith, I will return into mine house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished; then goeth he, and taketh with him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first.* Even as a Prisoner that hath escaped, and is again recovered, is loaded with double irons. Let the people of God be content to run any hazzard, endure any difficulties in the way of Religion, rather than return again into their former bondage, to sin and Satan. O Christian, if ever God gave thee a sight, and a sense of the misery and danger of thy natural state, if ever thou hast felt the pangs and throes of a labouring and distressed Conscience, and after all this tasted the unspeakable sweetness of the peace and rest that is in Christ, thou wilt rather choose to dye ten thousand deaths than to forsake Christ, and go back again into that sad condition.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *How suitable and well-becoming is a free spirit in Believers to their state of liberty and freedom?* Christ hath made your condition free. O let the temper and frame of your hearts be free also, do all that you do for God with a spirit of freedom: not by constraint but willingly. Methinks, Christians, the new nature that is in you should stand for a command, and be instead of all arguments that use to work upon the hopes and fears of other men: See how all creatures work according to the principle of their natures: you need not command a Mother to draw forth her breasts to a sucking Child: nature it self teaches and prompts to that: you need not

not bid the Sea ebb or flow at the ſtated hours. O Chriſtian, why ſhould thy heart need any other argument than its own ſpiritual inclination to keep its ſtated times and ſeaſons of communion with God? Let none of Gods commandments be grievous to you: let not thine heart need dragging and forcing to its own benefit and advantage. Whatever you do for God do it cheerfully, and whatever you ſuffer for God ſuffer it cheerfully: it was a brave ſpirit which acted holy *Paul, I am ready*, ſaith he, *not only to be bound, but alſo to dye at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus*, Acts 21. 13.

Inference 4.

Let no man wonder at the enmity and oppoſition of Satan to the preaching of the Goſpel: For by the Goſpel it is that ſouls are recovered out of his power, *Acts* 26. 18. 'tis the expreſs work of Miniſters *to turn men from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* Satan (as one ſaith) is a great and jealous Prince: he will never endure to have liberty proclaimed by the Miniſters of Chriſt within his dominions: and indeed what is it leſs when the Goſpel is preached in power, but as it were by beat of Drum and ſound of Trumpet to proclaim liberty, liberty, ſpiritual ſweet and everlaſting liberty, to every ſoul that is made ſenſible of the bondage of corruption and cruel ſervitude of Satan, and will now come over to Jeſus Chriſt? and oh what numbers and multitudes of priſoners have broken looſe from Satan at one proclamation of Chriſts, *Acts* 2. 41. but Satan owes the ſervants of Chriſt a ſpite for this, and will be ſure to pay them if ever they come within his reach: perſecution is the Genius of the Goſpel, and follows it as the ſhadow doth the body. *Inference* 4.

Inference 5.

How careful ſhould Chriſtians be to maintain their ſpiritual liberty in all, and every point thereof? Stand faſt (ſaith *Paul*) *in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free; and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage*, Gal. 5. 1. and again, *Ye are bought with a price, be not ye the ſervants of men.* It's *Inference* 5.

Chriſts

Christs prerogative to prescribe the rules of his own house; he hath given no man dominion over your faith, 2 *Cor.* 1. 24. one man is no rule to another, but the word of Christ a rule to all: follow not the holiest of men one step farther than they follow Christ, 1 *Cor.* 11. 4. Man is an ambitious creature, naturally affecting dominion: and dominion over the mind rather than over the body: to give law to others feeds pride in himself: so far as any man brings the word of Christ to warrant his injunctions, so far we are to obey, and no farther: Christ is your Lord and Lawgiver.

Inference 6.

Inference 6. Lastly, *Let this encourage and perswade sinners to come to Christ, for with him is sweet liberty for poor captives.* Oh that you did but know what a blessed state Jesus Christ would bring you into: *Come unto me* (saith he) *ye that labour, and are heavy laden*; and what encouragement doth he give to comers but this, *my yoke is easie, and my burthen is light?* The Devil perswaded you that the ways of obedience and strict godliness are a perfect bondage; but if ever God regenerate you, you will find his ways, ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace: you will rejoyce in the way of his Commandments as much as in all riches: you will find the worst work Christ puts you about even suffering work, sweeter than all the pleasures that ever you found in sin. O therefore open your hearts at the call of the Gospel: come unto Christ, then shall you be free indeed.

The

The Nineteenth SERMON.

Sermon 19.

1 PET. 3. 18.

For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God.

Text. The Saints coming home to God by Reconciliation and Glorification, opened and applied.

THE scope of the Apostle in this place is to prepare and fortifie Christians for a day of suffering. In order to their chearful sustaining whereof he prescribeth two excellent rules of mighty use for all suffering Christians.

First, To get a good Conscience within them, *vers.* 16, 17. *hic murus aheneus esto.*

Secondly, To set the example of Christs suffering before them, *vers.* 18. for Christ hath once suffered for sinners: the sufferings of Christ for us, is the great motive engaging Christians to suffer chearfully for him.

In the words before us we have,

First, The sufficiency and fulness of Christs sufferings intimated in that particle [once] Christ needs to suffer no more, having finished and compleated that whole work at once.

Secondly,

Secondly, The meritorious cause of the sufferings of Christ, and that is sin, *Christ once suffered for sins:* not his own sins, but ours: as it follows in the next clause, which is the third thing here observable, *viz.*

Thirdly, The admirable grace and unexampled love of Christ to us sinners, *the just for the unjust*, in which words the substitution of Christ in the room and place of sinners, the vice-gerence of his death is plainly expressed. Christ died not only *nostro bono*, for our good, but also *nostro loco* in our stead.

Fourthly, Here is also the final cause or design and scope of the sufferings of Christ, which was *to bring us to God.*

Fifthly, Here is also the issue of the sufferings of Christ, which was the death of Christ in the flesh, and the quickning of Christ after death by the Spirit: many excellent observations are lodged in the bosom of this Scripture: all which I must pass in silence at this time, and confine my discourse to the final cause of the sufferings of Christ, namely *that he might* bring *us to God:* where the observation will be plainly and briefly this.

DOCT.

Doct. *That the end of Christs cursed death and bitter sufferings was to bring all those for whom he died unto God.*

In the explication and preparation of this point for use two things must be spoken unto.

viz.
1. What Christs bringing us to God imports.
2. What influence the death of Christ hath upon this design of bringing us to God.

1.) First, What Christs bringing us to God imports: and certainly there be many great and excellent things carried in this expression: more generally it notes our state of *reconciliation* and our state of *glorification:* by reconciliation we are brought nigh to God, Ephes. 2. 13. *Ye are made nigh,* (*i.e.*) reconciled, *by the blood of Christ.* Heb. 12. 22, 23. we are said *to come to God the Judge of all.* By reconciliation we are brought nigh unto God now; by glorification we shall be brought

brought home to God hereafter, 1 Thes. 4. 17. *We shall be ever with the Lord:* but more particularly this phrase, *that he might brings us to God*, imports,

First, That the chief happiness of man consisteth in the enjoyment of God: that the creature hath as necessary dependance upon God for happiness, as the stream hath upon the fountain, or the image in the glass upon the face of him that looks into it. Look as the sum of the creatures misery lies in this, *depart from me*; separation from God is the principal part of damnation: So on the contrary, the chief happiness of the creature consisteth in the enjoyment and blessed vision of God, 1 John 3. 2. Psal. 17. 15. *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.* (1.)

Secondly, It implies mans revolt and apostasie from God, Ephes. 2. 12. *But now in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometime afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* Those whom Christ bringeth unto God were before afar off from him, both in state and condition; and in temper and disposition: we were lost creatures, and had no desire to return to God: the Prodigal was said to go into a far Country, *Luke* 15. 30. (2.)

Licet facultates non fuerunt per lapsum ablatæ, determinatio tamen earum ad objecta spiritualia fuit protinus extincta. Zeæm. *de imagine Dei.*

Thirdly, Christs bringing us to God implies our inability to return to God of our selves: we must be brought back by Christ, or perish for ever in a state of separation from God: the lost sheep is made the *emblem* of the lost sinner, *Luke* 15. 5. The sheep returns not to the fold of it self, but the shepheard seeks it, finds it, and carries it back upon his shoulders: and the *Apostle* plainly tells us, *Rom.* 5. 6. that when *we were without strength* (*i. e.*) any ability to recover, help or save our selves; *in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* (3.)

Fourthly, Christs bringing us to God evidently implies this, that Gods unsatisfied justice was once the great bar betwixt him and man: man can have no access to God but by Christ: Christ brings us to God by no other way but the way of satisfaction by his blood: *he hath suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* Better ten thousand worlds should perish for ever, than God should lose the honour of his justice. This great *Obex*, or bar to our enjoyment of God is effectually removed by the death of Christ: whereby it is not only fully satisfied, but highly (4.)

honoured and glorified, *Rom.* 3. 24. and so the way by which we are brought to God is again opened (to the wonder and joy of all Believers) by the blood and sufferings of Christ.

(5.) Fifthly, and lastly, It shews us the peculiar happiness and priviledge of Believers above all people in the world. These only are they which shall be brought to God by Jesus Christ in a reconciled state: others indeed shall be brought to God as a *Judge*, to be condemned by him: Believers only are brought to God in the Mediators hand, as a reconciled *Father* to be made blessed for ever in the injoyment of him: every Believer is brought singly to God at his death, *Luke* 16. 22. and all Believers shall be jointly and solemnly presented to God in the great day, *Col.* 1. 22. *Jude v.* 24. They shall be all presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Now the priviledge of Believers in that day will lie in diverse things.

First, That they shall be all brought to God together: this will be the general assembly mentioned, *Heb.* 12. 22. there shall be a collection of all Believers in all ages of the world into one blessed assembly: they shall come from the East, and West, and North, and South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God, *Luke* 13. 29. O what a glorious train will be seen following the redeemer in that day!

Secondly, As all the Saints shall be collected into one body: so they shall be all brought or presented unto God, faultless and without blemish, Jude v. 24. *A glorious Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing*, Ephes. 5. 27. For this is the general assembly of the spirits of just men that are made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. All sin was perfectly separated from them, when death had separated their souls and bodies.

Thirdly, In this lies the priviledge of Believers, that as they shall be all brought together, and that in a state of absolute purity and perfection, so they shall be all brought to God: they shall see his face, in the vision whereof is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore, *Psal.* 16 11. The objective blessedness of the Saints consisteth in their fruition of God, *Psal.* 73. 25. To see God in his word and works, is the happiness of the Saints on earth, but to see him face to face will be the fulness of their blessedness in Heaven, 1 *John* 3. 2. This is that intuitive, transform-

transforming and satisfying vision of which the Scripture frequently speaks, *Psal.* 17. 15. 2 *Cor.* 15. 28. *Rev.* 7. 17.

Fourthly, to be brought unto God, must needs imply a state of perfect joy and highest delight: so speaks the Apostle *Jude v.* 14. Christ shall present or bring them to God with exceeding joy: and more fully the joy of this day is expressed, Psal. 45. 15. *With joy and rejoycing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the Kings Palace:* it will be a day of universal joy, when all the Saints are brought home to God in a perfected state. For,

1. God the Father will rejoice when Christ brings home that precious number of his elect, whom he redeemed by his blood: he rejoyceth in them now though imperfect, and under many distastful corruptions and weaknesses, *Zeph.* 3. 17. How much more will he rejoyce in them when Christ presents them without spot or wrinkle to him, *Ephes.* 5. 27.

2. Jesus Christ will exceedingly rejoyce, 'twill be the day of the gladness and satisfaction of his heart: for now, and not till now he receives his mystical fulness, *Col.* 1. 24. beholds all the blessed issues of his death, which cannot but give him unspeakable contentment, Isai. 53. 11. *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.*

3. The day in which Believers are brought home to God, will be a day of unspeakable joy to the holy Spirit of God himself. For unto this all his sanctifying designs in this world had respect: to this day he sealed them: after this day he stirred up desires and groanings that cannot be uttered in their hearts, *Ephes.* 4. 30. *Rom.* 8. 26. Thus all the great and blessed persons, Father, Son and Spirit, will rejoyce in the bringing home of the elect to God. For as it is the greatest joy to a man to see the designs which his heart hath been long projecting and intently set upon, by an orderly conduct, at last brought to the happy issue he first aimed at; much more will it be so here: the counsel and hand of each person being deeply concerned in this blessed design.

4. The Angels of God will rejoyce at the bringing home of Believers to him: the spirits of just men made perfect will be united in one general assembly with an innumerable company of Angels, *Heb.* 2. 22. Great is the affection and love of Angels to redeemed ones: they greatly rejoyced at

the incarnation of Christ for them, *Luke* 2. 13. They greatly delighted to pry into the mysterie of their redemption, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. They were marvellously delighted at their conversion which was the day of their espousals to Christ, *Luke* 15. 10. They have been tender and careful over them, and very serviceable to them in this world, *Heb.* 1. 14. and therefore cannot but rejoice exceedingly to see them all brought home in safety to their Fathers house.

5. To Conclude, Christs bringing home of all Believers unto God, will be matter of unspeakable joy to themselves. For whatever knowledge and acquaintance they had with God here, whatever sights of faith they had of Heaven and the glory to come in this world; yet the sight of God and Christ the Redeemer will be an unspeakable surprise to them in that day. This will be the day of relieving all their wants; the day of satisfaction to all their desires: for now they are come where they would be; arrived at the very desires of their souls.

2. Secondly, In the last place, let it be considered what influence the death of Christ hath upon this design, and you shall find it much every way. In two things especially the death of Christ hath a blessed causality and influence in this matter,

viz. { 1. It effectually removes all obstacles to it.
2. It purchaseth (as a price) their title to it.

First, The death of Christ removes all obstacles out of the way of this mercy: such were the bars hindring our access to God, as nothing but the death of Christ could remove and open a way for Believers to come to God. The *guilt* of sin barred us from his gracious presence, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Hosea* 14. 2. The *filth* of sin excluded us from God, *Hab.* 1. 13. *Heb.* 12. 14. The *enmity* of our nature perfectly stopped up our way to God, *Col.* 1. 21. *Rom.* 8. 7. by reason hereof fallen man hath no desire to come unto God, *Job* 21. 14. The *Justice* of God like a flaming Sword turning every way, kept all men from access to God: and lastly, *Satan* that malicious and armed adversary lay as a Lyon in the way to God, 2 *Pet.* 5. 8. Oh with what strong bars were the

the gates of Heaven ſhut againſt our ſouls! The way to God was chained up with ſuch difficulties as none but Chriſt was able to remove; and he by death hath effectually removed them all: the way is now open, even the new and the living way, conſecrated for us by his blood. The death of Chriſt effectually removes the guilt of ſin, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. waſhes off the filth of ſin, 1 *John* 5. 6. takes away the enmity of nature, *Col.* 1. 20, 21. ſatisfied all the demands of juſtice, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. hath broken all the power of Satan, *Col.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 2. 14. and conſequently the way to God is effectually and fully opened to Believers by the blood of Jeſus, *Heb.* 10. 20.

Secondly, The blood of Chriſt purchaſeth for Believers their right and title to this priviledge, Gal. 4. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law: to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons,* (*i. e.*) both the relation and inheritance of ſons. There was value and worth enough in the precious blood of Chriſt, not only to pay all our debts to juſtice, but over and above the payment of our debts to purchaſe for us this invaluable priviledge. We muſt put this unſpeakable mercy of being brought to God, as my Text puts it, upon the account and ſcore of the death of Chriſt. No Believer had ever taſted the ſweetneſs of ſuch a mercy, if Chriſt had not taſted the bitterneſs of death for him. The uſe of all you will have in the following Deductions of truth.

Deduction 1.

Great is the preciouſneſs and worth of ſouls, that the life of Chriſt ſhould be given to redeem and recover them to God: As God laid out his thoughts and counſel from eternity upon them to project the way and method of their ſalvation: ſo the Lord Jeſus in purſuance of that bleſſed deſign, came from the boſom of the Father, and ſpilt his invaluable blood to bring them to God. No wiſe man expends vaſt ſums to bring home trifling commodities. How cheap ſoever our ſouls are in our eſtimation, 'tis evident by this they are of precious eſteem in the eyes of Chriſt.

Deduction

Deduction 2.

Redeemed souls must expect no rest or satisfaction on this side Heaven, and the full enjoyment of God: the life of a Believer in this world is a life of motion and expectation: they are now coming to God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. God, you see, is the centre and rest of their souls, *Heb.* 4. 9. As the Rivers cannot rest till they pour themselves into the bosom of the Sea, so neither can renewed souls find rest till they come into the bosom of God. There be four things which do and will break the rest and disturb the souls of Believers in this world; afflictions, temptations, corruptions, and absence from God: if the three former causes of disquietness were totally removed, so that a Believer were placed in such a condition upon earth where no affliction should disturb him, no temptation trouble him, no corruption defile or grieve him: yet his very absence from God must still keep him restless and unsatisfied, 2 Cor. 5. 6. *Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.*

Fecisti nos ad te, & inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te. Aug. Confess. lib. 1. cap. 1.

Deduction 3.

What sweet and pleasant thoughts should all Believers have of death! When they dye, and never till they dye shall they be fully brought home to God. Death to the Saints is the dore by which they enter into the enjoyment of God: the dying Christian is almost at home, yet a few pangs and agonies more, and then he is come to God in whose presence is the fulness of joy. *I desire,* saith *Paul, to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better,* Phil. 1. 23. It should not feare us to be brought to death, the King of terrors, so long as it is the office of death to bring us to God. That dreaming opinion of the soul sleeping after death is as ungrounded as it is uncomfortable: the same day we loose from this shore, we shall be landed upon the blessed shore, where we shall see and enjoy God for ever. O if the friends of dead Believers did but understand where, and with whom their souls are, whilst they are mourning over their bodies: certainly a few believing thoughts of this would quickly dry up their tears,

and

and fill the houſe of mourning with voices of praiſe and thankſgiving.

Deduction 4.

How comfortable and ſweet ſhould the converſes and communication of Chriſtians be with one another in this world! Chriſt is bringing them all to God through this vale of tears, they are now in the way to him, all bound for Heaven, going home to God to their everlaſting reſt in glory: every day, every hour, every duty brings them nearer and nearer to their journeys end, Rom. 13. 11. *Now,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *is our ſalvation nearer than when we believed.* O what manner of heavenly communications and raviſhing diſcourſes ſhould Believers have with each other as they walk by the way! O what pleaſant and delightful ſtories ſhould they tell one another about the place and ſtate whither Chriſt is bringing them, and where they ſhall ſhortly be! What raviſhing, tranſporting, transforming viſions they ſhall have that day they are brought home to God: how ſurprizingly glorious the ſight of Jeſus Chriſt will be to them, who died for them to bring them unto God. How ſhould ſuch diſcourſes as theſe ſhorten and ſweeten their paſſage through this world; ſtrengthen and encourage the dejected and feeble minded, and exceedingly honour and adorn their profeſſion! Thus lived the Believers of old, Heb. 11. 9, 10. *By faith he ſojourned in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Iſaac, and Jacob, the heirs with him of the ſame promiſe, for he looked for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God.* But alas, moſt Chriſtians are either entangled in the cares and troubles, or ſo enſnared by the delights and pleaſures, which almoſt continually divert and take up their thoughts by the way, that there is but little room for any diſcourſes of Chriſt and Heaven among many of them: but certainly this would be as much your intereſt as your duty. When the *Apoſtle* had entertained the *Theſſalonians* with a lovely diſcourſe of their meeting the Lord in the air, and being ever with the Lord, he charges it upon them as their great duty to comfort one another with thoſe words, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17, 18.

Deduction

Deduction 5.

How unreaſonable are the dejections of Believers upon the account of thoſe troubles which they meet with in this world! 'Tis true, afflictions of all kinds do attend Believers in their way to God; through many tribulations we muſt enter into that Kingdom: but what then? Muſt we deſpond and droop under them as other men? Surely no, if afflictions be the way through which you muſt come to God, then never be diſcouraged at affliction. Troubles and afflictions are of excellent uſe under the bleſſing of the Spirit to further Chriſts great deſign of bringing you to God. How often would you turn out of that way which leads to God, if God did not hedge up your way with thorns, *Hoſea* 2. 6. Doubtleſs when you come home to God, you ſhall find you have been as much beholding (it may be a great deal more) to your troubles than to your comforts, for bringing you thither: however the ſweetneſs of the end will infinitely more than recompence the ſorrows and troubles of the way: nor are they worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in you, *Rom.* 8. 18.

Deduction 6.

How much are all Believers obliged in point of intereſt to follow Jeſus Chriſt whitherſoever he goes! Thus are the Saints deſcribed, Rev. 14. 4. *Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth: theſe were redeemed from among men being the firſt-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* If it be the deſign of Chriſt to bring us to God, then certainly it is our duty to follow Chriſt in all the paths of active and paſſive obedience through which he now leads us, as ever we expect to be brought home to God at laſt: *We are made partakers of Chriſt, if we hold the beginning of our confidence ſtedfaſt unto the end,* Heb. 3. 14. If we have followed him through many ſufferings and troubles, and ſhall turn away from him at laſt, we loſe all that we have wrought and ſuffered in Religion, and ſhall never reach home to God at laſt:

laſt: the Crown of life belongs only to them who are faithful to the death.

Deduction 7.

Let all that deſire or expect to come unto God hereafter, come to Chriſt by faith now. There is no other way to the Father but by Chriſt: no other way to Chriſt but faith: how vain therefore are the hopes and expectations of all unbelievers? Be aſſured of this great truth, *Death* ſhall bring you to God as an avenging Judge, if *Chriſt* do not bring you now to God as a reconciled Father: without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God: the dore of hope is ſhut againſt all Chriſtleſs perſons, John 14.6. *No man cometh unto the Father but by me.* Oh what a ſweet voice cometh down from Heaven to your ſouls this day, ſaying, As ever you expect or hope to come to God and enjoy the bleſſednes that is here, come unto Chriſt, obey his calls, give up your ſelves to his conduct and government, and you ſhall certainly be brought to God: as ſure as you ſhall now be brought to Jeſus Chriſt by ſpiritual union, ſo ſure ſhall you be brought to God in full fruition.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt, the new and living way to the Father.

AND thus I have finiſhed the Motives drawn from the titles and benefits of Chriſt, ſerving to enforce and quicken the great Goſpel-exhortation of coming to, and effectually applying the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the way of faith. O that the bleſſings of the Spirit might follow theſe Calls, and fix theſe Conſiderations as Nailes in ſure places. But ſeeing the great hindrance and obſtruction to faith is the falſe opinion and perſwaſion of moſt unregenerate men, that they are already in Chriſt; My next work therefore ſhall be in a ſecond *Uſe of Conviction* to undeceive men in that matter; and that by ſhewing them the undoubted certainty of theſe two things:

Firſt, That there is no coming ordinarily to Chriſt without the Applications of the Law to our Conſciences in a way of effectual *Conviction.*

Secondly, Nor by that neither without the teachings of God, in the way of ſpiritual illumination. The firſt of theſe will be fully confirmed and opened in

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The Twentieth SERMON.

Sermon 20.

ROM. 7. 9.

For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, ſin revived, and I died.

Text. The great uſefulneſs of the Law or Word of God, in order to the application of Chriſt.

THE ſcope of the Apoſtle in this Epiſtle, and more particularly in this Chapter, is to ſtate the due uſe and excellency of the Law, which he doth accordingly,

Firſt, By denying to it, power to juſtifie us, which is the peculiar honour of Chriſt.

Secondly, By aſcribing to it a power to convince us, and ſo prepare us for Chriſt.

Neither attributing to it more honour than belongeth to it, nor yet detracting from it that honour and uſefulneſs which God hath given it. It cannot make us righteous; but it can convince us that we are unrighteous; it cannot heal, but it can open and diſcover the wounds that ſin hath given us: which he proves in this place by an argument drawn from his own experience, confirmed alſo by the general experience of Believers, in whoſe perſons and names we muſt here un-

derſtand him to ſpeak; *For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, ſin revived, and I died:* wherein three particulars are very obſervable.

1. Firſt, The opinion *Paul* had, and all unregenerate men have of themſelves before Converſion: *I was alive once:* by *life* underſtand here livelineſs, chearfulneſs, and confidence of his good eſtate and condition: he was full of vain hope, falſe joy and preſumptuous confidence, a very brisk and jovial man.

2. Secondly, The ſenſe and opinion he had, and all others will have of themſelves, if ever they come under the regenerating work of the Spirit in his ordinary method of working: *I died.* The death he here ſpeaks of, ſtands oppoſed to that life before mentioned; and ſignifies the ſorrows, fears and tremblings that ſeized upon his ſoul, when his ſtate and temper were upon the change: the apprehenſions he then had of his condition ſtruck him home to the heart and damped all his carnal mirth: *I died.*

3. Thirdly, The ground and reaſon of this wonderful alteration and change of his judgement, and apprehenſion of his own condition; *the Commandment came, and ſin revived*; the Commandment came, (*i. e.*) it came home to my Conſcience, it was ſet on with a divine and mighty efficacy upon my heart: the Commandment was come before by way of promulgation and the literal knowledge of it: but it never came till now in the ſpiritual ſenſe and convincing power to his ſoul: though he had often read and heard the Law before, yet he never clearly underſtood the meaning and extent, he never felt the mighty efficacy thereof upon his heart before; it ſo came at this time, as it never came before.

From

From hence the observations are,

DOCT. 1.

That unregenerate persons are generally full of groundless confidence and chearfulness, though their condition be sad and miserable. *Doct.* 1.

DOCT. 2.

That there is a mighty efficacy in the Word or Law of God to kill vain confidence and quench carnal mirth in the hearts of men, when God sets it home upon their Consciences. *Doct.* 2.

We shall take both these points under consideration, and improve them to the design in hand.

DOCT. 1.

That unregenerate persons are generally full of groundless confidence and chearfulness, though their condition be sad and miserable. Rev. 3. 17. *Because thou saist I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:* this is the very life that unregenerate men do live. *Doct.* 1.

In the opening whereof I will shew you,

1. What is the life of the unregenerate.
2. What maintains that life.
3. How it appears that this is the life the generality of the world do live.
4. The danger of living such a life as this: and then apply it.

First, What is the life of the unregenerate, and wherein it consists? Now there being among others three things in which the life of the unregenerate doth principally consist, 1.

viz.

viz. { Carnal Security,
Presumptuous Hope, and
False Joy:

Of these briefly in their order.

First, There is in unregenerate men a great deal of *carnal security*, they dread no danger, Luke 11. 21. *When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:* there is generally a great stillness and silence in the Consciences of such men: when others (in a better condition) are watching and trembling, they sleep securely, so they live, and so oft-times they dye, Psal. 73. 4. *they have no bonds in their death*; Hebrew, no knots, no difficulties that puzzle them: 'tis true, the Consciences of few men are so perfectly stupified, but that sometime or other they twinge and gird them, but it seldom works at that height, or continues with them so long as to give any considerable interruption to their carnal peace and quietness.

Secondly, The life of the unregenerate consisteth in presumptuous hope: this is the very foundation of their carnal security. So Christ tells the Jews, John 8. 54, 55. *Of whom ye say that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* The world is full of hope without a promise, which is but as a Spiders web when a stress comes to be laid upon it, *Job* 27. 8. Unregenerate men are said indeed to be without hope, *Eph.* 2.12. but the meaning is, they are without any solid well-grounded hope: for in Scripture account vain hope is no hope. Except it be a lively hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. a hope flowing from union with Christ, *Col.* 1.27. a hope nourished by experience, *Rom.* 5. 4. a hope for which a man can give a reason, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. a hope that puts men upon heart-purifying endeavours, 1 *John* 3. 3. it is in the account of God a cypher, a vanity, not deserving the name of hope: and yet such a groundless, dead, Christless, irrational idle hope is that which the unregenerate lives upon.

Thirdly, The life of the unregenerate consisteth in false joy, the immediate off spring of ungrounded hope, *Mat.* 13. 20. the stony ground received the word with joy.

There

There are two sorts of joy upon which the unregenerate live,

viz. { 1. A sensitive joy in things *Carnal.*
2. A delusive joy in things *Spiritual.*

They rejoyce in Corn, Wine and Oyl, in their Estates and Children, in the pleasant fruitions of the Creature: yea, and they rejoyce also in Christ and the Promises, in Heaven and Glory: with all which they have just such a kind of communion as a man hath in a dream with a full feast and curious musick, and just so their joy will vanish when they awake. Now these three, *security*, *hope* and *joy* make up the livelihood of the carnal world.

Secondly, Next it concerns us to enquire what are the things that maintain and support this security, hope and joy in the hearts of unregenerate men, and if we consider duely, we shall find Church priviledges, natural ignorance, false evidences of the love of God, slight workings of the Gospel, self-love, comparing themselves with the more prophane; and Satans policy managing all these in order to their eternal ruine; are so many springs to feed and maintain this life of delusion in the unregenerate. 2.

1. First, Church priviledges lay the foundation to this strong delusion: thus the Jews deceived themselves, saying in their hearts, *We have Abraham for our Father*, Mat. 3. 9. This propt up their vain hopes that *Abrahams* blood ran in their veins, though *Abrahams* faith and obedience never wrought in their hearts.

2. Secondly, Natural ignorance, this keeps all in peace; they that see not, fear not. There are but two ways to quiet the hearts of men about their spiritual and eternal concernments, *viz. the way of assurance* and faith, or *the way of ignorance* and self-deceit: by the one we are put beyond danger, by the other beyond fear, though the danger be greater. Satan could never quiet men if he did not first blind them.

3. Thirdly, False evidence of the love of God is another spring feeding this security, vain hope, and false joy in the hearts

hearts of men: ſee the power of it to huſh and ſtill the Conſcience, Mat. 7. 22. *Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name*, &c. The things upon which they build their evidence and confidence were external things in Religion, yet they had a quieting power upon them as if they had been the beſt evidences in the world.

4. Fourthly, Slight workings of the Goſpel, ſuch are tranſient motions of the affections under the word, *Heb.* 6. 8. the working of their deſires about ſpiritual objects, *Joh.* 6. 34. *Mat.* 25. 8. the external change and reformation of their ways, *Mat.* 12. 43. all which ſerve to nouriſh the vain hopes of the unregenerate.

5. Fifthly, Self-love is an apparent reaſon and ground of ſecurity and falſe hope, *Mat.* 7. 3. it makes a man to overlook great evils in himſelf, whilſt he is ſharp-ſighted to diſcover and cenſure leſſer evils in others: ſelf-love takes away the ſight of ſin, by bringing it too near the eye.

6. Sixthly, Mens comparing themſelves with thoſe that are more prophane and groſly wicked than themſelves, ſerves notably to quiet and huſh the Conſcience aſleep; *God, I thank thee*, ſaid the Phariſee, *I am not as other men, or as this Publican.* O what a Saint did he ſeem to himſelf, when he ſtood by thoſe that were more externally wicked!

7. Seventhly and Laſtly, The policy of Satan to manage all theſe things to the blinding and ruining of the ſouls of men, is another great reaſon they live ſo ſecurely and pleaſantly as they do, in a ſtate of ſo much danger and miſery, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *The God of this world blinds the eyes of them that believe not.*

3. Thirdly, You have ſeen what the life of the unregenerate is, and what maintains that life: in the next place I ſhall give you evidence that this is the life the generality of the world do live: a life of carnal ſecurity, vain hope and falſe joy: this will evidently appear, if we conſider,

Firſt, The activity and livelineſs of mens ſpirits in purſuit of the world. O how lively and vigorous are their hearts in the management of earthly deſigns, Pſal. 6. 4. *Who will ſhew us any good?* The world eats up their hearts, time and ſtrength. Now this could never be if their eyes were

were but opened to see the danger and misery their souls be in: how few designs for the world run in the thoughts of a condemned man? O if God had ever made the light of conviction to shine into their Consciences, certainly the temptations would lye the quite contrary way; even in too great a neglect of things of this life: but this briskness and liveliness plainly shews the great security which is upon most men.

Secondly, The marvellous quietness and stillness that is in the thoughts and consciences of men about their everlasting concernments plainly shews this to be the life of the unregenerate: how few scruples, doubts or fears shall you hear from them? how many years may a man live in carnal families before he shall hear such a question as this seriously propounded, *What shall I do to be saved?* There are no questions in their lips, because no fear or sense of danger in their hearts.

Thirdly, The general contentedness and profest willingness of carnal men to dye, gives clear evidence that such a life of security and vain hope is the life they live; *Like sheep they are laid in the grave*, Psal. 49. 14. O how quiet and still are their Consciences, when there are but a few breaths more between them and everlasting burnings! Had God opened their eyes to apprehend the consequences of death, and what follows the pale Horse, *Rev.* 6. 8. it were impossible but that every unregenerate man should make that bed on which he dies shake and tremble under him.

Fourthly and Lastly, The low esteem men have for Christ, and the total neglect of, at least the meer trifling with those duties in which he is to be found, plainly discovers this stupid secure life to be the life that the generality of the world do live: for were men sensible of the disease of sin, there could be no quieting them without Christ the *Physician*, *Phil.* 3. 8. All the business they have to do in this world could never keep them from their knees, or make them strangers to their Closets: all which, and much more that might be said of like nature, gives too full and clear proof to this sad assertion, that this is the life the unregenerate world generally lives.

Fourthly, In the last place I would speak a few words to discover the danger of such a life as hath been described, to

which purpoſe let the following brief hints be minded ſeriouſly.

Firſt, By theſe things ſouls are inevitably betrayed into Hell and eternal ruine, this blinding is in order to damning, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; whoſe eyes the god of this world hath blinded:* thoſe that are turned over into eternal death are thus generally mop't and hoodwinkt in order thereunto, Iſai. 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid go and tell this people, hear ye indeed but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes; leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert and be healed.*

Secondly, As damning is the event of blinding, ſo nothing makes Hell a more terrible ſurpriſe to the ſoul than this doth: by this means the wrath of God is felt before its danger be apprehended, a man is paſt all hope before he begins to have any fear: his eternal ruine like a breach ready to fall, ſwelling out in a high wall cometh ſuddenly at an inſtant, *Iſa.* 30. 13. And as it damns ſurely and ſurprizingly, ſo,

Thirdly, Nothing more aggravates a mans damnation than to ſink ſuddenly into it, from amidſt ſo many hopes and high confidence of ſafety: for a man to find himſelf in Hell when he thought and concluded himſelf within a ſtep of Heaven, O what a Hell will it be to ſuch men! the higher their vain hopes lifted them up, the more dreadful muſt their fall be, *Mat.* 7. 22. And as it damns ſurely, ſurprizingly and with higheſt aggravations, So,

Fourthly, This life of ſecurity and vain hope fruſtrates all the means of recovery and ſalvation in the only ſeaſon, wherein they can be uſeful and beneficial to us: by reaſon of theſe things the word hath no power to convince mens Conſciences, nothing can bring them to a ſight and ſenſe of their condition: therefore Chriſt told the ſelf-confident and blind Jews, Mat. 21. 21. *That the Publicans and Harlots go into the kingdom of God before them:* and the reaſon is, becauſe their hearts lye more open and fair to the ſtrokes of conviction and compunction for ſin than thoſe do, who are blinded by vain hopes and confidences.

Inference.

Inference 1.

Is this the life that the unregenerate world lives? then it is not to be wondered at, that the preaching of the Gospel hath so little success: who hath believed our report (saith the Prophet) *and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Isai. 53. 1. Ministers study for truths apt to awaken and convince the Consciences of them that hear them, but their words return again to them: they turn to God and mourn over the matter, we have laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought; and this is the cause of all security; and vain hopes bar fast the dores of mens hearts against all the convictions and perswasions of the word: the greater cause have they to admire the grace of God, who have or shall find the convictions of the word sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit: to whose hearts God brings home the Commandment by an effectual application. *Inference* 1.

Inference 2.

If this be the life of the unregenerate world, what deadly enemies are they that nourish and strengthen the groundless confidences and vain hopes of salvation in men! This the Scripture calls the healing of the hurt of souls slightly, by crying peace, peace, when there is no peace, *Jer.* 6. 14. the sowing of Pillows under their arm-holes, *Ezech.* 13. 18. that they may lye soft and easie under the Ministry: and this is the Doctrine which the people love, but O what will the end of these things be! and what an account have those men to give to God for the blood of those souls by them betrayed to the everlasting burnings! Such flattery is the greatest cruelty: those whom you bless upon earth will curse you in Hell, and the day in which they trusted their souls to your conduct. *Inference* 2.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *How great a mercy is it to be awakened out of that general ſleep and ſecurity which is fallen upon the world?* You cannot eſtimate the value of that mercy, for it is a peculiar mercy. O that ever the Spirit of the Lord ſhould give thy ſoul a jog under the Miniſtry of the word, ſtartle, and rouſe thy Conſcience, whilſt others are left ſnoring in the deep ſleep of ſecurity round about thee: when the Lord ſhall deal with thy ſoul much after that rate he did with *Paul* in the way to *Damaſcus*, who not only ſaw a light ſhining from Heaven, which thoſe that travelled with him ſaw as well as he, but heard that voice from Heaven which did the work upon his heart, though his Companions heard it not. Beſides, it is not only a peculiar mercy, but it is a leading introductive mercy to all other ſpiritual mercies that follow it to all eternity: if God had not done this for thee, thou hadſt never been brought to faith, to Chriſt or Heaven: for from this act of the Spirit all other ſaving acts take their riſe: ſo that you have cauſe for ever to admire the goodneſs of God in ſuch a favour as this is.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. Laſtly, *Hence it follows, that the generality of the world are in the direct way to eternal ruine, and whatever their vain confidences are, they cannot be ſaved: Narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Hear me all you that live this dangerous life of carnal ſecurity and vain hope, whatever your perſwaſions and confidences are; except you give them up and get better grounds for your hope, you cannot be ſaved. For,

Firſt, Such hopes and confidences as yours are directly contradictory to the eſtabliſhed order of the Goſpel, which requires repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. faith, *Acts* 13. 39. and regeneration, *John* 3. 3. in all that ſhall be ſaved: and this order ſhall never be altered for any mans ſake.

Secondly, If ſuch as you be ſaved, all the threatnings in Scripture muſt be reverſed, which lie in full oppoſition to your

your vain hopes, *Mark* 16. 16. *John* 3. 16. *Rom.* 3. 8, 9. either the truth of God in these threatnings must fail, or your vain hopes must fail.

Thirdly, If ever such as you be saved, new conditions must be set to all the promises: for there is no condition of any special promise found in any unregenerate person. Compare your hearts with these Scriptures, *Mat.* 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Psal.* 24. 4. *Psal.* 84. 11. *Gen.* 17. 1, 2.

Fourthly, If ever such a hope as yours bring you to Heaven, then the saving hope of Gods elect is not rightly described to us in the Scriptures. Scripture hope is the effect of regeneration, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. and purity of heart is the effect of that hope, 1 *John* 3. 3. Nay,

Fifthly, The very nature of Heaven is mistaken in Scripture, if such as you be Subjects qualified for its enjoyment: for assimilation or the conformity of the soul to God in holiness, is in the Scripture account a principal ingredient of that blessedness: by all which it manifestly appears that the hopes of most men are vain, and will never bring them to Heaven.

The

The Twenty first SERMON.

Sermon 21.

Doct. 2.

Doct. 2. *That there is a mighty efficacy in the Word or Law of God to kill vain Confidence and quench carnal Mirth in the hearts of men, when God sets it home upon their Consciences.*

2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. *THe weapons of the word are not carnal but mighty through God; to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.* In the opening of this point I shall

1. Demonstrate the efficacy of the word or Law of God.
2. Shew wherein the efficacy thereof lies.
3. From whence it hath all this mighty power and efficacy.

1. First, I shall give you some demonstrations of the mighty power and efficacy that there is in the word or Law of God: which will appear with fullest evidence,

First,

First, From the various *subjects* upon whom it works: the hearts and Consciences of men of all orders and qualities have been reached and wounded to the quick by the two-edged sword of Gods Law. Some among the *great and honourable* of the earth, (though indeed the fewest of that rank) have been made to stoop and tremble under the word, *Act.* 24. 16. *Mark* 6. 20. 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. the wise and learned of the world have felt its power, and been brought over to imbrace the humbling and self-denying ways of Christ, *Acts* 17. 34. Thus *Origen*, *Hierom*, *Tertullian*, *Bradwardine*, and many more came into *Canaan* laden with *Egyptian Gold*, as one speaks (*i. e.*) they came into the Church of God abundantly enriched and furnished with the learned arts and sciences; devoting them all to the service of Christ: Yea, and which is as strange, *the most simple, weak and illiterate* have been wonderfully changed and wrought upon by the power of the word: *the testimonies of the Lord make wise the simple.* Men of weak understandings in all other matters have been made wise to salvation by the power of the word, *Mat.* 11. 25. 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. Nay, the most malicious and obstinate enemies of Christ have been wounded and converted by the word, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Act.* 16. 24. Those that have been under the prejudice of the worst, and most *idolatrous education*, have been the subjects of its mighty power, *Act.* 19. 26. To conclude, men of the most profligate and debauched lives have been wonderfully changed, and altered by the power of the word, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11.

Secondly, The mighty efficacy of the Law of God appears in the *manner of its operation* which works suddenly, strikes like a Dart through the hearts and Consciences of men, *Act.* 2. 37. a wonderful change is made in a short time: and as it works quickly and suddenly, so it works irresistibly, with an uncontrouled power, upon the spirits of men, 1 *Thes.* 1. 5. *Rom.* 1. 16. Let the soul be armed against conviction with the thickest ignorance, strongest prejudice, or most obstinate resolution, the word of God will wound the breast even of such a man; when God sends it forth in his authority and power.

Thirdly, The wonderful power of the Law or word of God is evidently seen in the strange effects which are produced by it in the hearts and lives of men. For,

First,

First, It changes and alters the frame and temper of the mind: it moulds a man into a quite contrary temper, Gal. 1. 23. *He which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith, which once he destroyed:* thus a *Tyger* is transformed into a Lamb by the power of the word of God.

Secondly, It makes the soul upon which it works to forgo and quit the dearest interest it hath in this world for Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. riches, honours, self-righteousness, dearest relations are denied and forsaken: reproach, poverty and death it self are willingly imbraced for Christs sake; when once the efficacy of the word hath been upon the hearts of men, 1 *Thes.* 1. 6. Those that were their companions in sin are declined, renounced and cast off with abhorrence, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3, 4. In such things as these the mighty power of the word discovers it self.

2. Secondly, Next let us see wherein the efficacy of the word upon the souls of men principally consisteth: and we find in Scripture it exerteth its power in five distinct acts upon the soul; by all which it strikes at the life, and kills the very heart of vain hopes. For,

First, It hath an awakening efficacy upon secure and sleepy sinners: it rouzes the Conscience, and brings a man to a sense and feeling apprehension, *Eph.* 5. 13, 14. the first effectual jog or touch of the word startles the drousie Conscience. A poor sinner lies in his sins as *Peter* did in his Chains fast asleep, though a Warrant were signed for his Execution the next day: but the Spirit in the word awakens him, as the Angel did *Peter:* and this awakening power of the word is in order both of time and nature antecedent to all its other operations and effects.

Secondly, The Law of God hath an enlightning efficacy upon the minds of men: 'tis eye-salve to the blinded eye, *Rev.* 3. 18. a light shining in a dark place, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. a light shining into the very heart of man, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. When the word comes in power, all things appear with another face: the sins that were hid from our eyes, and the danger which was concealed by the policy of Satan from our souls, now lie clear and open before us, *Eph.* 5. 8.

Thirdly, The word of God hath a convincing efficacy: it sets sin in order before the soul, *Psal.* 50. 21. as an Army is drawn

drawn up in exact order, so are the sins of nature and practice, the sins of youth and age, even a great and terrible Army is drawn up before the eye of the Conscience; the convictions of the word are clear and full, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. the very secrets of a sinners heart are made manifest; his mouth is stopt; his pleas are silenced; his Conscience yields to the charge of guilt, and equity of the sentence of the Law. So that the soul stands mute, and self-condemned at the Bar of Conscience: it hath nothing to say why the wrath of God should not come upon it to the uttermost, *Rom.* 3. 19.

Fourthly, The Law of God hath a soul-wounding, an heart-cutting efficacy: it pierces into the very soul and spirit of man, Act. 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked at their hearts, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles; Men and brethren what shall we do?* A dreadful sound is in the sinners ears, his soul is in deep distress, he knows not which way to turn for ease; no Plaister but the blood of Christ can heal these wounds which the word makes: no outward trouble, affliction, disgrace or loss ever touched the quick as the word of God doth.

Fifthly, The word hath a heart-turning, a soul converting efficacy in it: 'tis a regenerating as well as a convincing word, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. 1 *Thes.* 1. 9. The Law wounds, the Gospel cures; the Law discovers the evil that is in sin, and the misery that follows sin: and the Spirit of God working in fellowship with the word effectually turns the heart from sin. And thus we see in what glorious acts, the efficacy of the word discovers it self upon the hearts of men, and all these acts lie in order to each other: for until the soul be awakened it cannot be enlightned, *Eph.* 5. 14. till it be enlightned it cannot be convinced, *Eph.* 5. 13. Conviction being nothing else, but the application of the light that shines in the mind to the Conscience of a sinner; till it be convinced it cannot be wounded for sin, *Act.* 2. 37. and until it be wounded for sin, it will never be converted from sin, and brought effectually to Jesus Christ: and thus you see what the power of the word is.

Thirdly, In the last place, it will concern us to enquire whence the word of God hath all this power; and it is most certain that it is not a power inherent in it self, nor 3.

derived from the inſtrument by which it is managed; but from the Spirit of the Lord who communicates to it all that power and efficacy which it hath upon our ſouls.

Firſt, Its power is not in or from it ſelf: it works not in a *Phyſical way* as natural agents do; for then the effect would alwayes follow, except it were miraculouſly hindred: but this ſpiritual efficacy is in the word, as the healing vertue was in the waters of *Bethesda*, John 5. 4. *An Angel went down at a certain ſeaſon into the Pool, and troubled the water: whoſoever then firſt after the troubling of the water ſtepped in, was made whole of whatſoever diſeaſe he had.* It is not a power naturally inherent in it at all times, but communicated to it at ſome ſpecial ſeaſons: how often is the word Preached, and no man awaked or convinced by it!

Secondly, The power of the word is not communicated to it by the inſtrument that manageth it, 1 Cor. 3. 7. *Neither is he that planteth any thing; neither he that watereth.* Miniſters are nothing to ſuch an effect and purpoſe as this is: he doth not mean that they are uſeleſs and altogether unneceſſary, but inſufficient of themſelves to produce ſuch mighty effects: it works not as it is the word of man, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. Miniſters may ſay of the ordinary, as *Peter* ſaid of the extraordinary effects of the Spirit, Acts 3. 12. *Ye men of Iſrael why marvel ye at this, or why look ye ſo earneſtly on us, as though by our own power or holineſs we had made this man to walk?* If the effects of the word were in the power, and at the command of him that preacheth it, then the blood of all the ſouls that periſh under our Miniſtry muſt lye at our door, as was formerly noted.

Thirdly, If you ſay whence then hath the word all this power? Our anſwer is, it derives it all from the Spirit of God, 1 Theſ. 2. 13. *For this cauſe thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.* 'Tis a ſucceſsful inſtrument only when it is in the hand of the Spirit, without whoſe influence it never did, nor can convince, convert or ſave any ſoul. Now, the Spirit of God hath a ſoveraignty over three things in order to the converſion of the ſinner.

Literâ jubetur, ſpiritu donatur. Aug. Ep. 157.

viz.

viz.
1. Over the word which works.
2. Over the soul wrought upon.
3. Over the time and season of working.

First, The Spirit hath a glorious soveraignty over the word it self, whose instrument it is, to make it successful or not; as it pleaseth him, Isai. 55. 10, 11. *For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from Heaven,* &c. *so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth:* as the Clouds so the word is carried and directed by divine pleasure: 'tis the Lord that makes them both give down their blessings, or to pass away fruitless and empty: yea, 'tis from the Spirit that this part of the word works and not another: those things upon which Ministers bestow greatest labour in their preparation, and from which accordingly they have the greatest expectation; these do nothing, when mean time something that dropt occasionally from them, like a chosen Shaft strikes the mark and doth the work.

Secondly, The Spirit of the Lord hath a glorious soveraignty over the souls wrought upon; 'tis his peculiar work to take away the stony heart out of our flesh, and to give us an heart of flesh, *Ezec.* 36. 26. We may reason, exhort and reprove, but nothing will stick till the Lord set it on. The Lord opened the heart of *Lydia* under *Pauls* ministry: he opens every heart that is effectually opened to receive Christ in the word: if the word can get no entrance, if your hearts remain dead under it still, we may say concerning such souls, as *Martha* did concerning her Brother *Lazarus*; *Lord if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died.* So, Lord, if thou hadst been in this Sermon, in this Prayer, or in that counsel, these souls had not remained dead under them.

Thirdly, The Spirit hath dominion over the times and seasons of conviction and conversion: therefore the day in which souls are wrought upon is called *the day of his power,* Psal. 110. 3. that shall work at one time, which had no efficacy at all at another time: because this, and not that was the time appointed: and thus you see whence the word derives that mighty power it hath.

Now this word of God when it is ſet home by the Spirit is mighty to convince, humble and break the hearts of ſinners, Joh. 16. 9. *The Spirit when it cometh ſhall convince the world of ſin:* the word ſignifies conviction by ſuch clear demonſtration as compelleth aſſent: it not only convinces men in general that they are ſinners, but it convinceth men particularly of their own ſins, and the aggravations of them. So in the Text, *ſin revived*, that is, the Lord revived his ſins, the very circumſtances and aggravations with which they were committed: and ſo it will be with us when the Commandment comes: ſins that we had forgotten, committed ſo far back as our youth or childhood; ſins that lay ſlighted in our Conſciences, ſhall now be rouzed up as ſo many ſleepy *Lyons* to affright and terrifie us: for now the ſoul hears the voice of God in the word, as *Adam* heard it in the cool of the day and was afraid, and hides it ſelf; but all will not do: for the Lord is come in the word: ſin is held up before the eyes of the Conſcience in its dreadful aggravations and fearful conſequences, as committed againſt the holy Law, clear light, warnings of Conſcience, manifold mercies, Gods long-ſuffering, Chriſts precious blood, many warnings of judgements, the wages and demerit whereof by the verdict of a mans own Conſcience, is death, eternal death, *Rom.* 6: 23. *Rom.* 1. 32. *Rom.* 2. 9. thus the Commandment comes, ſin revives, and vain hopes give up the Ghoſt.

Inference 1.

Inference 1: *Is there ſuch a mighty power in the word, then certainly the word is of divine authority:* there cannot be a more clear, and ſatisfying proof, that it is no humane invention, than the common ſenſe that all Believers have of the almighty power in which it works upon their hearts: ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 1. Theſ. 2. 13. *When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God; which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.* Can the power of any creature, the word of a meer man, ſo convince the Conſcience, ſo terrifie the heart, ſo diſcover the very ſecret thoughts of the ſoul, put a man into ſuch tremblings? No, no, a greater than man muſt needs be.

be here: none but a God can ſo open the eyes of the blind, ſo open the graves of the dead, ſo quicken and enliven the Conſcience that was ſeared, ſo bind over the ſoul of a ſinner to the judgement to come, ſo change and alter the frame and temper of a mans ſpirit, ſo powerfully raiſe, refreſh and comfort a drooping dying ſoul. Certainly the power of God is in all this; and if there were no more, yet this alone were ſufficient to make full proof of the divine authority of the Scriptures.

Inference 2.

Judge from hence what an invaluable mercy the preaching of the word is to the world: 'tis a bleſſing far above our eſtimation of it; little do we know what a treaſure God committeth to us in the Ordinances, Acts 13. 25. *To you is the word of this ſalvation ſent:* 'tis the very power of God to ſalvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. and ſalvation is ordinarily denied to whom the preaching of the word is denied, *Rom.* 10. 14. It's called *the word of life*, Phil. 2. 16. and deſerves to be valued by every one of us as our life: the eternal decree of Gods election is executed by it upon our ſouls: as many as be ordained to eternal life ſhall believe by the preaching of it. Great is the ingratitude of this generation which ſo ſlights and undervalues this invaluable treaſure: which is a ſad preſage of the moſt terrible judgement, even the removing our *Candleſtick* out of its place, except we repent. *Inference* 2.

Inference 3.

How ſore and terrible a judgement lies upon the ſouls of thoſe men to whom no word of God is made powerful enough to convince and awaken them! Yet ſo ſtands the caſe with thouſands who conſtantly ſit under the preaching of the word: many Arrows are ſhot at their Conſciences, but none goes home to the mark, all fall ſhort of the end: the Commandment hath come unto them many thouſand times, by way of *promulgation* and miniſterial *inculcation*, but never yet came home to their ſouls by the ſpirits effectual *application*. Oh friends, you have often heard the voice of man, but you never yet heard the *Inference* 3.

the voice of God: your understandings have been *instructed*, but your Consciences to this day were never throughly *convinced*; *We have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented*, Mat. 11. 17. *Who hath believed our report, and unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed*? Alas, we have laboured in vain, we have spent our strength for nought, our word returns unto us empty; but O what a stupendious judgement is here! Heb. 6. 7, 8. *The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* What a sore judgement and sign of Gods displeasure would you account it, if your fields were cursed; if you should manure, dress, plough and sow them; but never reap the fruit of your labour, the increase being still blasted? And yet this were nothing compared with the blasting of the word to your souls: that which is a savour of life unto life unto some, becomes *the savour of death unto death, to others*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. The Lord affect our hearts with the terrible stroaks of God upon the souls of men.

2d Use of Exhortation.

Use 2. I shall conclude this point with a few words of Exhortation to three sorts of men,

viz.
1. To those that never felt the power of the word.
2. To those that have only felt some slight and common effects thereof.
3. To those unto whose very hearts the Commandment is come in its effectual and saving power.

1. First, You that never felt any power in the word at all, I beg you in the name of him that made you, and by all the regard and value you have for those precious souls within you; that now at last such Considerations as these may find place in your souls; and that you will bethink your selves,

Con-

Consideration 1.

Whose word that is that cannot gain entrance into your hearts, is it not the Word of God which you despise and slight? *thou castest my word behind thy back*, Psal. 50. 17. O what an affront and provocation to God is this! you despise not man but God; the great and terrible God, in whose hand your breath and soul is: this contempt runs higher than you imagine.

Consid. 2.

Consider that however the Word hath no power upon you, the commandment cannot come home to your hearts; yet it doth work, and comes home with power to the hearts of others: whilest you are hardened, others are melted under it: whilest you sleep, others tremble; whilest your hearts are fast locked up, others are opened: how can you choose but reflect with fear and trembling upon these contrary effects of the word? especially when you consider that the eternal decrees both of election and reprobation are now executed upon the souls of men by the preaching of the Word. Some believe, and others are hardened.

Consid. 3.

That no Judgement of God on this side hell is greater than a hard heart, and stupid Conscience under the Word: it were much better that the providence of God should blast thy Estate, take away thy Children, or destroy thy health, than harden thy heart, and seare thy Conscience under the Word. So much as thy soul is better than thy body, so much as Eternity is more valuable than time; so much is this spiritual Judgement more dreadful than all temporal ones: God doth not inflict a more terrible stroke than this upon any men in this world.

O therefore as you love your own souls, and are loth to ruine them to all Eternity, attend upon every opportunity that God affords you, for you know not in which of them the Lord

Lord may work upon your hearts: lay aſide your prejudices againſt the Word, or the weakneſſes and infirmities of them that preach it: for the Word works not as it is the word of man, as it is thus neat, and elegant, but as it is the Word of God: pray for the bleſſing of God upon the Word, for except his word of bleſſing go forth with it, it can never come home to thy ſoul: meditate upon what you hear; for without meditation it is not like to have any effectual operation upon you. Search your ſouls by it, and conſider whether that be not your very caſe and ſtate which it deſcribes, your very danger whereof it gives warning; take heed leſt after you have heard it, the cares of the world choke not what you have heard, and cauſe thoſe budding convictions which begin to put forth, to blaſt and wither: carefully attend to all thoſe *Items* and *memorandums* your Conſciences give you under the word, and conclude that the Lord is then come nigh unto you.

2. Secondly, let this be matter of ſerious conſideration and caution to all ſuch as have only felt ſome ſlight, tranſient, and ineffectual operations of the Goſpel upon their ſouls: the Lord hath come nigh ſome of our ſouls, we have felt a ſtrange power in the Ordinances, ſometimes terrifying, and ſometimes tranſporting our hearts; but alas, it proves but a morning dew, or an early cloud, *Hoſ.* 6. 4. we rejoice in the Word, but it is but for a ſeaſon, *Job.* 3. 35. *Gal.* 4. 14, 15. they are vaniſhing motions, and come to nothing. Look as in nature there are many *abortives* as well as perfect Children, ſo it is in Religion: yea, where the new Creature is perfectly formed in one ſoul, there be many abortives and miſcarriages: and there may be three reaſons aſſigned for it, *viz.*

Firſt, The Subtilty and deep policy of Satan, who never more effectually deceives and deſtroys the ſouls of men, than in ſuch a method, and by ſuch an artifice as this: for when men have once felt their Conſciences terrified under the Word, and their hearts at other times raviſhed with the joyes and comforts of it, they now ſeem to have attained all that is neceſſary to converſion, and conſtitutive of the new Creature: theſe things look ſo well like the regenerating effects of the ſpirit, that many are eaſily deceived by them. The devil beguiles the hearts of the unwary by ſuch falſe appearances: for

for it is not every man that can distinguish betwixt the natural and spiritual motions of the affections under the word: it is very frequently seen that even carnal and unrenewed hearts have their meltings and transports as well as spiritual hearts. The subject-matter upon which the word treats are the weighty things of the world to come: heaven and hell are very awful and affecting things, and an unrenewed heart is apt to thaw and melt at them; now here is the cheat of Satan, to perswade a man that these must needs be spiritual affections, because the objects about which they are conversant are spiritual. Whereas it is certain, the object of the affections may be very spiritual and heavenly, and yet the workings of a mans affections about them, may be in a meer natural way.

Secondly, The dampening efficacy of the world is a true and proper cause of these abortions and miscarriages under the Word, *Luke* 8. 12, 13, 14. there are hopeful and promising beginnings and budding of affections in some persons, especially in their youth; but when once they come to be engaged in the world, how soon are they dampt and quenched! as the cares of a Family grow on, so do the cares of salvation wear off: 'tis not as it was wont to be, what shall I do to be saved? how shall I get interest in Christ? but what shall I eat and drink, and wherewithal shall I and mine be maintained? Thus earth justles out heaven, and the present world drowns all thoughts of that to come. Good had it been for many men, they had never been engaged so deep in the world as they are: their life is but a constant hurry of business, and a perpetual diversion from Christ, and things that are eternal.

Thirdly, Lastly, The deceitfulness and treachery of the heart, which too easily gives way to the designs of Satan and suffers it self to be imposed upon by him, is not the least cause why so many hopeful beginnings come to nothing, and the effects of the word vanish. Pride and self-love are very apt to over-value every little good, and slight or undervalue every evil that is in us: and so quickly choaks those convictions that begin to work in our souls.

But oh that such men would consider that the dying away of their convictions, is that which threatens the life of their

ſouls for ever: now is the bud withered, the bloſſome blaſted, and what expectation is there of fruit after this, except the Lord revive them again? The Lord open mens eyes to diſcern the danger of ſuch things as theſe are, *Jud. ver.* 12. *Heb.* 10. 38. Yet I deny not, but there are many ſtands and pauſes in the work of converſion: it ſeems to dye away, and then revives again; and revive it muſt or we are loſt; but how many are there who never recover it more! This is a ſore Judgement of a moſt terrible conſequence to the ſouls of men.

3. 3. Thirdly, In the laſt place, Let it be a word of counſel and advice to them upon whom the word works effectually and powerfully: to whoſe hearts the commandment is come home, to revive ſin, and kill their vain hopes: and theſe are of two ſorts.

1. *Embryos* under the firſt workings of the Spirit.
2. Compleat births of the Spirit, regenerated ſouls.

1. Firſt, *Embryos* that are under the firſt workings of the Spirit in the word. O let it not ſeem a miſery or unhappineſs to you that the Commandment is come, and ſin revived, and your former hopes overthrown. It muſt be thus if ever God intend mercy for you. Had you gone on in that dangerous ſecurity you were in before, you had certainly been loſt for ever: God hath ſtopt you in that path that leads down to hell, and none that go in there do ever return again, or take hold of the paths of life. O 'tis better to weep, tremble, and be diſtreſſed now, than to mourn without hope for ever: let it not trouble you that ſin hath found you out; you could never have found out the remedy in Chriſt, if you had not found out the diſeaſe and danger, by the coming of the commandment. And I beſeech you carefully to obſerve whether the effects and operations of the word upon your hearts be deeper and more powerful than they are found to be in ſuch ſouls as miſcarry under it: the Commandment comes to them, and ſhews them this or that more groſs and ſtartling ſin; doth it come to you and ſhew you not only this or that particular ſin, but all the evils of your heart and life? the cor-

corruption of your natures, as well as the transgressions of your lives? if so, it promises well, and looks hopefully and comfortably to you. The commandment comes to others and startles them with the fears of damnation for their sin: it puts them into a grievous fright at hell, and the everlasting burnings; but doth it come to thee and discover the infinite evil that is in thy sin, as it is committed against the great, holy, righteous, and good God; and so melts thy heart into tears for the wrong that thou hast done him, as well as the danger into which thou hast brought thy self? This is a hopeful work, and may encourage thee. It comes to others and greatly shakes, but never destroyes and razes the foundation of their vain hopes: if it so revive sin, as to kill all vain hopes in thee, and shut thee up to Christ, as thy only door of hope, fear not; these troubles will prove the greatest mercies that ever befell thee in this world, if thus they work, and continue to work upon thy soul.

Secondly, Others there are upon whom the Word hath had its full effect as to Conversion. O bless God for ever for this mercy: you cannot sufficiently value it. God hath not only made it a convincing and wounding, but a converting and healing word to your souls: he hath not only revived your sins, and killed your vain hopes, but begotten you again to a lively hope: see that you be thankful for this mercy. How many have sate under the same word but never felt such effects of it? As Christ said in another case, There were many Widows in *Israel* in the time of *Elijah*, but unto none of them was the Prophet sent save unto *Sarepta* a City of *Sidon* to a certain Widow there, *Luke* 4. 46. So I may say in this case, there were many souls in the same Congregation, at the same time; but unto none of them was the word sent with a Commission to convince and save; but such a one as thy self: one as improbable to be wrought upon as any soul there. O let this beget thankfulness in your souls: and let it make you love the word as long as you live. *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickened me*, Psal. 119. 93. 2.

But above all, I beseech you make it appear that the Commandment hath come home to your hearts with power to convince you of the evil of sin, by your tenderness and care

to ſhun it as long as you live. If ever you have ſeen the face of ſin in the glaſs of the Law of God, if your hearts have been humbled and broken for it in the dayes of your trouble and diſtreſs; certainly you will chooſe the worſt affliction rather than ſin: it would be the greateſt folly in the world to return again to iniquity, *Pſal.* 85. 8. you that have ſeen ſo much of the evil that is in it, and the danger that follows it; you that have had ſuch inward terrours and fears of Spirit about it, when that terrible repreſentation was made you; will be loth to feel thoſe gripes and diſtreſſes of Conſcience again, for the beſt enjoyment in this world.

Bleſſed be God if any word have been brought home to our hearts which hath been inſtrumental to bring us to Chriſt.

The

The Twenty ſecond SERMON.

Sermon 22.

JOHN 6. 45.

Text.

It is written in the Prophets, And they ſhall be all taught of God: every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

The teachings of God opened, in their nature and neceſſity.

HOW neceſſary to our Union with Jeſus Chriſt the application of the Law, or coming home of the Commandment to the heart of a ſinner is, we have heard in the laſt diſcourſe: and how impoſſible it is, either for the Commandment to come to us, or for us to come to Chriſt without illumination, and inſtruction from above, you ſhall hear in this.

This Scripture hath much of the mind of God in it, and he that is to open it had need himſelf to be taught of God. In the foregoing verſes Chriſt offers himſelf as the bread of life unto the ſouls of men: againſt this doctrine they oppoſe their carnal reaſon, *ver.* 41, 42. Chriſt ſtrikes at the root of all their Cavils and objections in his reply, ver. 43, 44. *Murmur not among your ſelves, no man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him, q. d.* you ſlight me becauſe you do not know me, you do not know me,

me, because you are not taught of God: of these divine teachings, the Prophets of old have spoken, and what they foretold is at this day fulfilled in our sight: so many as are taught of God, and no more come unto me in the way of faith: 'tis impossible to come without the teachings of God, *ver.* 44. 'tis as impossible not to come, or to miscarry in their coming unto me, under the influence of these Divine teachings, *ver.* 45.

The words read consist of two parts,

Viz. 1. An allegation out of the Prophets.
2. The application thereof made by Christ.

1. First, An allegation out of the Prophets: *it is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God*: the places in the Prophets to which Christ seems here to refer are, Isa. 54. 13. *and all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord*, and Jer. 31. 34. *and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord*: these promises contain the great blessings of the New Covenant, *viz.* Divine instruction, and heavenly illumination, without which no man can be brought up to the terms of the New Covenant.

2. Secondly, We have here the application of these Testimonies out of the Prophets made by Christ himself, *every man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father cometh unto me.*

In which words we have both the necessity, and the efficacy of these divine teachings: without them no man can come, and under them no man can miscarry The words being fitly rendred, and the sense obvious,

The

The Notes are,

DOCT. 1.

That the teachings of God are abſolutely neceſſary to every man that cometh unto Chriſt in the way of faith. *Doct.* 1.

DOCT. 2.

No man can miſs of Chriſt, or miſcarry in the way of faith, that is under the ſpecial inſtructions and teachings of the father. *Doct.* 2.

DOCT. 1.

That the teachings of God are abſolutely neceſſary to every man that cometh unto Chriſt in the way of faith.

Of the neceſſity of Divine teaching in order to believing, the Apoſtle ſpeaks in Eph. 4. 20, 21. *but ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be that you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jeſus, (i. e.)* your faith muſt needs be effectual both to the reformation of your lives, and your perſeverance in the wayes of holineſs, if it be ſuch a faith as is begotten and introduced into your hearts by divine teachings. Now in the Explication of this point I ſhall ſpeak diſtinctly to the following enquiries.

Qui credunt prædicatore forinſecus inſonante, intus à patre audiunt, atque diſcunt: qui autem non credunt, foris audiunt, intus non audiunt. Aug. de prædeſt. cap. 8.

1. How doth God teach men, or what is imported in our being taught of God?
2. What thoſe ſpecial leſſons are, which all believers do hear, and are taught of God?
3. In what manner doth God teach theſe things to men in the day of their converſion to Chriſt.
4. What Influence Gods teaching hath upon our believing?
5. Why it is impoſſible for any man to believe or come to Chriſt without the Fathers teachings.

Firſt,

1. Firſt, How doth God teach men, or what is imported in our being taught of God? To this I will ſpeak both *negatively* and *poſitively*, for your clearer apprehenſion of the ſenſe and meaning of the Spirit of God in this phraſe.

Firſt, The teaching of God, and our hearing and learning of him is not to be underſtood of any extraordinary viſional appearances, or *Oraculous* and immediate voice of God to men: God indeed hath ſo appeared unto ſome, *Numb.* 12. 8. ſuch voices have been heard from Heaven: but now theſe extraordinary wayes are ceaſed, *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. and we are no more to expect them: we may ſooner meet with Satanical deluſions, than Divine illuminations in this way. I remember the Learned *Gerſon* tells us that the Devil once appeared unto an holy man in Prayer, perſonating Chriſt, and ſaying, I am come in Perſon to viſit thee, for thou art worthy: but he with both hands ſhut his eyes, ſaying, *nolo hic Chriſtum videre, ſatis eſt ipſum in gloria videre,* (*i. e.*) I will not ſee Chriſt here, it is enough for me to ſee him in glory. We are now to attend only to the voice of the Spirit in the Scriptures: this is a more ſure word, than any voice from Heaven, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19.

Secondly, The teachings of God are not to be underſtood as oppoſite unto, or excluſive of the teachings of men. Divine teachings do not render Miniſteral teachings vain or uſeleſs. *Paul* was taught of God, *Gal.* 1. 12. and his Converſion had ſomething extraordinary in it, yet the Miniſtry of *Ananias* was uſed, and honoured in that work, *Acts* 9. 4, 17. compared. Divine teachings do indeed *excell*, but not *exclude* humane teachings. I know that Scripture, *Jer.* 31. 24. to which Chriſt here refers, is objected againſt the neceſſity of a ſtanding Miniſtry in the Church, *they ſhall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother*, &c. but if thoſe words ſhould be underſtood abſolutely, they would not only overthrow all publick Ordinances of Gods own inſtitution, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. and deprive us of a principal fruit of Chriſts Aſcenſion, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. but for the ſame reaſon would deſtroy all private inſtructions, and fraternal admonitions alſo. Such a ſenſe would make the *Prophet* to contradict the *Apoſtle*; and ſpoile the conſent and harmony of the Scriptures: the ſence therefore cannot be *negative* but *comparative*: it ſhews the excellency of Divine, but doth not deſtroy the uſefulneſs of humane teachings.

teachings. *Subordinata non pugnant:* the teachings of men are made effectual by the teachings of the Spirit, and the Spirit in his teachings will uſe and honour the Miniſtry of man.

Thirdly, But to ſpeak poſitively, the teachings of God are nothing elſe, but that ſpiritual and heavenly light, by which the Spirit of God ſhineth into the hearts of men to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. and though this be the proper work of the Spirit, yet it is called the teachings of the Father, becauſe the Spirit who enlightens us is commiſſionated, and ſent by the Father ſo to do, *Joh.* 14. 26. Now theſe teachings of the Spirit of God conſiſt in two things, *viz.*

In his { 1. Sanctifying impreſſions. 2. Gracious aſſiſtances.

Firſt, In his Sanctifying impreſſions, or regenerating works upon the ſoul, by vertue whereof it receives marvellous light and inſight in ſpiritual things: and that not only as illumination is the firſt act of the ſpirit in our converſion, *Col.* 3. 10. but as his whole work of ſanctification is Illuminative and inſtructive to the converted ſoul, 1 Joh. 2. 27. *the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the ſame anointing teacheth you:* the meaning is, that Sanctification gives the ſoul experience of thoſe Myſterious things which are contained in the Scriptures, and that experience is the moſt excellent key to unlock, and open thoſe deep Scripture Myſteries: no knowledge is ſo diſtinct, ſo clear, ſo ſweet, as that which the heart communicates to the head, Joh. 7. 17. *if any man do his will, he ſhall know the doctrine*: a man that never read the nature of love in books of *Philoſophy*, nor the tranſports and ecſtaſies thereof in Hiſtory, may yet truly deſcribe and expreſs it by the ſenſible motions of that paſſion in his own ſoul: yea, he that hath felt, much better underſtands, than he that hath only read or heard. O what a light doth ſpiritual ſenſe and experience caſt upon a great part of the Scriptures! for indeed ſanctification is the very copy or tranſcript of the Word of God upon

the heart of man, Jer. 31. 33. *I will write my Law in their heart:* ſo that the Scriptures, and the experiences of believers by this means anſwer to each other as the lines and letters in the Preſs, anſwer to the impreſſions made upon the paper: or the figures in the *wax* to the engravings in the *Seal.* When a Sanctified man reads *David's Pſalms*, or *Pauls Epiſtles*, how is he ſurpriſed with wonder to find the very workings of his own heart ſo exactly decyphered, and fully expreſſed there! Oh ſaith he, this is my very caſe: theſe holy men ſpeak what my very heart hath felt.

Secondly, The Spirit of God teacheth us, as by his ſanctifying impreſſions; ſo by his gracious aſſiſtances which he gives us *pro re nata*, as our need requires, Matth. 10. 19. *it ſhall be given you in that ſame hour what ye ſhall ſpeak:* Joh. 14. 26. *he ſhall bring all things to your remembrance:* he aſſiſteth both the underſtanding in due apprehenſions of truth, and the heart in the ſpiritual improvements of truth: and ſo much briefly of the firſt particular.

2. Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire what thoſe ſpecial truths are which believers hear, and learn of the father, when they come to Chriſt.

And there are divers great and neceſſary truths wherein the Spirit enlightens men in that day. I cannot ſay they are all taught every believer in the ſame degree, and order: but it is certain they are taught of God ſuch leſſons as theſe are, which they never ſo underſtood before.

Leſſon 1.

Firſt, They are taught of God, *that there is abundantly more evil in their ſinful natures and actions, than ever they diſcerned or underſtood before: the Spirit when he cometh ſhall convince the world of ſin*, John 16. 8, 9. Men have a general notion of ſin before: ſo had *Paul* when a Phariſee, but how vaſtly different were his apprehenſions of ſin, from all that ever he had in his natural ſtate, when God brought home the Commandment to his very heart! There is a threefold knowledge of Sin, viz. *Traditional*, *diſcurſive*, and *intuitive*. The Firſt is in the more rude and illiterate multitude. The Second, in more rational and knowing men. The Third

is

is only found in thoſe that are enlightned, and taught of God: and there is as great a difference betwixt this intuitive knowledge of ſin whereby God makes a ſoul to diſcern the nature and evil of it in a ſpiritual light, and the two former; as there is betwixt the ſight of a *painted Lyon* upon the wall, and the ſight of a *living Lyon* that meets us roaring in the way. The intuitive ſight of ſin is another thing than men imagine it to be: 'tis ſuch a ſight as wounds a man to the very heart, *Acts* 2. 37. for God doth not only ſhew a man this or that particular ſin, but in the day of conviction he ſets all his ſins in order before him, *Pſal.* 50. 21. yea, the Lord ſhews him the ſinfulneſs of his nature, as well as practice. Conviction diggs to the root, ſhews and layes open that original corruption from whence the innumerable evils of the life do ſpring, *Jam.* 1. 14, 15. and which is yet more, the Lord ſhews the man whom he is bringing to Chriſt the ſinful and miſerable ſtate which he is in by reaſon of both: *Joh.* 16. 9. and now all excuſes, pleas, and defences of ſin are gone: he ſhews them *how their iniquities have exceeded*, Job 36. 8, 9. exceeded in number, and in aggravation of ſinfulneſs; exceeding many, and exceeding vile; no ſuch ſinner in the world as I: can ſuch ſins as mine be pardoned? the greatneſs of God greatens my ſin, the holineſs of God makes it beyond meaſure vile: the goodneſs of God puts unconceivable weight into my guilt. O can there be mercy with God for ſuch a wretch as I? if there be, then there will not be a greater example of the riches of free grace in all the world than I am: thus God teacheth the evil of ſin.

Leſſon 2.

Secondly, *God teacheth the ſoul whom he is bringing to Chriſt, what that wrath and miſery is which hangs over it in the threatnings becauſe of ſin.* Scripture threatnings were formerly ſlighted, now the ſoul trembles at them: they once apprehended themſelves ſafe enough, *Iſa.* 28. 15. *Pſal.* 50. 21. they thought becauſe they heard no more of their ſins after the Commiſſion of them, that therefore they ſhould never hear more, that the effect had been as tranſi-

ent a thing as the act of ſin was, or if trouble muſt follow ſin, they ſhould ſpeed no worſe than others; the generality of the world being in the ſame caſe: and beſide, they hoped to find God more merciful, than ſowre and preciſe preachers repreſented him; but when a light from God enters into the ſoul to diſcover the nature of God and of ſin; then it ſees that whatever wrath is treaſured up for ſinners in the dreadful threatnings of the Law, is but the juſt demerit of ſin, the recompence that is meet: *the wages of ſin is death*, Rom. 6. ult. the *penal* evil of damnation is but equal to the *moral* evil of ſin: So that in the whole Ocean of Gods eternal wrath there is not one drop of injuſtice: yea, the ſoul doth not only ſee the Juſtice of God in its eternal damnation, but the wonderful mercy of God in the ſuſpenſion thereof ſo long. O what is it that hath withheld God from damning me all this while! how is it that I am not in hell! Now do the fears and awful apprehenſions of eternity ſeize the ſoul, and the worſt of ſenſitive creatures is ſuppoſed to be in a better condition than ſuch a ſoul: never do men tremble at the threatnings of God, nor rightly apprehend the danger of their condition, until ſin and wrath and the wages of ſin be diſcovered to them by a light from heaven.

Leſſon 3.

Thirdly, *God teaches the ſoul whom he brings to Chriſt that deliverance from ſin and wrath to come is the greateſt, and moſt important buſineſs it hath to do in this world*, Acts 16. 30. *what muſt I do to be ſaved? q. d.* O direct me to ſome effectual way (if there be any) to ſecure my poor wretched ſoul from the wrath of God. Sin and the wrath that follows it are things that ſwallow up the ſouls, and drink up the very ſpirit of men: their thoughts never converſed with things of more confeſſed truth, and awful ſolemnity: theſe things float not upon their fancies as matters of meer ſpeculation, but ſettle upon their hearts day and night as the deepeſt concernment in all the world: they now know much better than any meer Scholar, the deep ſenſe of that Text, Matth. 16. 26. *what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain*

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the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?

Five things ſhew how weighty the thoughts and cares of ſalvation are upon their hearts.

Firſt, Their continual thoughtfulneſs and ſolicitude about theſe things: if earthly affairs divert them for a while, yet they are ſtill returning again to this ſolemn buſineſs.

Secondly, Their careful redeeming of time, and ſaving the very moments thereof to employ about this work: thoſe that were prodigal of hours and dayes before, look upon every moment of time as a precious and valuable thing now.

Thirdly, Their fears and tremblings leſt they ſhould miſcarry and come ſhort at laſt, ſhew how much their hearts are ſet upon this work.

Fourthly, Their inquiſitiveneſs and readineſs to embrace all the help and aſſiſtance that they can get from others, evidently diſcovers this to be their great deſign.

Fifthly, and Laſtly, The little notice they take of all other troubles and afflictions tells you their hearts are taken up about greater things. This is the third Leſſon they are taught of God.

Leſſon 4.

Fourthly, *The Lord teaches the ſoul that is coming to Chriſt, that though it be their duty to ſtrive to the uttermoſt for ſalvation; yet all ſtrivings in their own ſtrength are inſufficient to obtain it.* This work is quite above the power of nature: *'tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy:* the ſoul is brought to a full Conviction of this, by the diſcovery of the heinous nature of ſin, and of the rigour and ſeverity of the Law of God: no repentance, nor reformation can poſſibly amount unto a juſt ſatisfaction, nor are they within the compaſs and power of our will. It was a ſaying that Dr. *Hill* often uſed to his friends, ſpeaking about the power of mans will, he would lay his hand upon his breaſt and ſay, *every man hath ſomething here to confute the* Arminian *doctrine*; this fully takes off the

ſoul

ſoul from all expectations of deliverance that way: it cannot but ſtrive, that is its duty; but to expect deliverance as the purchaſe of its own ſtrivings, that would be its ſin.

Leſſon 5.

Fifthly, *The ſoul that is coming to Chriſt by faith is taught of God, that though the caſe it is in be ſad, yet it is not deſperate, and remedileſs*; there is a door of hope, a way of eſcape for poor ſinners, how black and fearful ſoever their own thoughts and apprehenſions are. There is uſually at this time a dawning light of hope in the ſoul that is under the fathers teachings, and this commonly ariſes from the general and indefinite incouragements and promiſes of the Goſpel: which though they do not preſently ſecure the ſoul from danger, yet they prop and mightily ſupport it againſt deſpair; for though they be not certain that deliverance ſhall be the event of their trouble, yet the poſſibilities, and much more the probabilities of deliverance are a great ſtay to the ſinking ſoul: the troubled ſoul cannot but acknowledge it ſelf to be in a far better caſe than the damned are, whoſe hopes are periſhed from the Lord, and a death-pang of deſpair hath ſeiſed their Conſciences: and herein the merciful and compaſſionate nature of God is eminently diſcovered in haſtening to open the door of hope almoſt as ſoon as the evil of ſin is opened: it was not long after *Adams* eyes were opened to ſee his miſery, that God opened Chriſt his remedy in that firſt promiſe, *Gen.* 3. 15. and the ſame method of grace is ſtill continued to his Elect off-ſpring, *Gal.* 3. 21, 22. *Rom.* 3. 21, 22. theſe ſupporting hopes the Lord ſees neceſſary to encourage induſtry in the uſe of means: 'tis hope that ſets all the world awork: if all hope were cut off, every ſoul would ſit down in a ſullen deſpair yielding it ſelf for hell.

Leſſon

Leſſon 6.

The Lord teaches thoſe that come to Chriſt, that there is a fulneſs of ſaving power in him, whereby any ſoul that duely receives him may be perfectly delivered from all its ſin and miſery, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Col.* 1. 19. *Mat.* 28. 18. this is a great and neceſſary point for every Believer to learn and hear from the Father: for unleſs the ſoul be ſatisfied of the fulneſs of Chriſts ſaving power, it will never move forward towards him: and herein alſo the goodneſs of God is moſt ſweetly and ſeaſonably manifeſted; for at this time 'tis the great deſign of Satan to fill the ſoul with deſpairing thoughts of a pardon: but all thoſe black and heart-ſinking thoughts vaniſh before the diſcovery of Chriſts alſufficiency. Now the ſin-ſick ſoul ſaith with that woman, Mat. 9. 21. *If I may but touch the hem of his Garment, I ſhall be healed:* how deep ſoever the guilt and ſtain of ſin be, yet the ſoul which acknowledges the infinite dignity of the blood of Chriſt, the offering of it up to God in our room, and Gods declared ſatisfaction in it; muſt needs be ſatisfied that Chriſt is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto God by him,* which is the ſixth Leſſon Believers are taught of God.

Leſſon 7.

Every man that cometh to Chriſt is taught of God, *that it can never reap any benefit by the blood of Chriſt, except he have union with the perſon of Chriſt,* 1 *Joh.* 5. 12. *Eph.* 4. 16. Time was when men fondly thought nothing was neceſſary to their ſalvation but the death of Chriſt; but now the Lord ſhews them that their union with Chriſt by faith is as neceſſary in the place of an *applying cauſe,* as the death of Chriſt is in the place of a *meritorious cauſe*: the *purchaſe* of ſalvation is an act of Chriſt *without us* whilſt we are yet ſinners: the *application* thereof is by a work wrought *within us,* when we are believers, *Col.* 1. 27. In the purchaſe all the elect are redeemed together by way of price. In the application they are actually redeemed man by man by way of power. Look as the ſin of the firſt *Adam* could never hurt us, unleſs

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he had been our head by way of generation: ſo the righteouſneſs of Chriſt can never benefit us, unleſs he be our head in the way of regeneration. In teaching this Leſſon the Lord in mercy unteaches and blots out that dangerous principle by which the greateſt part of the Chriſtianized world do periſh, *viz.* that the death of Chriſt is in it ſelf effectual to ſalvation, though a man be never regenerated or united unto him by ſaving faith.

Leſſon 8.

God teaches the ſoul whom he is bringing to Chriſt, that whatſoever is neceſſary to be wrought in us, or done by us in order to our union with Chriſt, is to be obtained from him in the way of prayer, Ezek. 36. 37.

And it is obſervable that the ſoul no ſooner comes under the effectual teachings of God, but the ſpirit of prayer begins to breath in it, Acts 9. 8. *behold he prayeth*: thoſe that were taught to pray by men before, are now taught of the Lord to pray; to pray did I ſay? yea, and to pray fervently too, as men concerned for their eternal happineſs: to pray not only with others, but to pour out their ſouls before the Lord in ſecret; for their hearts are as bottles full of new wine, which muſt vent or break. Now the ſoul returns upon its God often in the ſame day; now it can expreſs its burthens and wants in words and groans which the ſpirit teacheth: they pray and will not give over praying till Chriſt come with compleat ſalvation.

Leſſon 9.

Ninthly, *All that come to Chriſt are taught of God to abandon their former wayes and companions in ſin as ever they expect to be received unto mercy, Iſai.* 55. 7. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Sins that were profitable and pleaſant, as the right hand, and right eye, muſt now be cut off. Companions in ſin, who were once the delight of their lives, muſt now be caſt off. Chriſt ſaith to the ſoul concerning theſe, as he ſaid in another caſe, John 18. 8. *if therefore ye ſeek me, let theſe go their way*: and the ſoul ſaith unto Chriſt as it is Pſalm 119. 115. *depart from*

from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God: and now pleaſant ſins, and companions in ſin become the very burthen and ſhame of a mans ſoul: objects of delight are become objects of pity and compaſſion: no endearments, no union of blood, no earthly intereſts whatſoever are found ſtrong enough to hold the ſoul any longer from Chriſt: nothing but the effectual teachings of God is found ſufficient to diſſolve ſuch bonds of iniquity as theſe.

Leſſon 10.

Tenthly, *All that come unto Chriſt are taught of God that there is ſuch a beauty and excellency in the wayes and people of God as is not to be matcht in the whole world*, *Pſal.* 16. 3. When the eyes of ſtrangers to Chriſt begin to be opened and enlightned in his knowledge, you may ſee what a change of judgement is wrought in them with reſpect to the people of God, and towards them eſpecially, whom God hath any way made inſtrumental for the good of their ſouls, *Cant.* 5. 9. they then called the ſpouſe of Chriſt, *the faireſt among women*: the convincing holineſs of the Bride then began to enamour and affect them with a deſire of nearer conjunction and communion: *we will ſeek him with thee*; *with thee*, that haſt *ſo charged us*; that haſt taken ſo much pains for the good of our ſouls: now, and never before, the righteous appeareth more excellent than his Neighbour. Change of heart is always accompanied with change of judgement, with reſpect to the people of God: thus the *Jaylor*, *Act.* 16. 33. waſhed the *Apoſtles* ſtripes, to whom he had been ſo cruel before. The godly now ſeem to be the glory of the places where they live: and the glory of any place ſeems to be darkned by their removal. As one ſaid of holy Mr. *Barrington*, *Methinks the Town is not at home, when Mr.* Barrington *is out of Town*: they eſteem it a choice mercy to be in their company, and acquaintance, Zech. 8. 23. *we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you*: no people like the people of God now: as one ſaid when he heard of two faithful friends, *utinam tertius eſſem*, O that I might make the third! Whatever vile or low thoughts they had of the people of God before, to be ſure now they are the excellent of the earth, in

whom is all their delight: the holineſs of the Saints might have ſome intereſt in their Conſciences before, but they never had ſuch an intereſt in their eſtimations and affections till this Leſſon was taught them by the Father.

Leſſon 11.

Eleventhly, *All that come to Chriſt are taught of God, that whatever difficulties they apprehend in Religion, yet they muſt not upon pain of damnation be diſcouraged thereby, or return back again to ſin.* Luke 9. 62. *No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God:* plowing work is hard work: a ſtrong and ſteady hand is required for it: he that plows muſt keep on, and make no balks of the hardeſt and tougheſt ground he meets with. Religion alſo is the running of a Race, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. there is no ſtanding ſtill, much leſs turning back if ever we hope to win the prize.

The Devil indeed labours every way to diſcourage and daunt the ſoul, by repreſenting the inſuperable difficulties of Religion to it; and young beginners are but too apt to be diſcouraged, and fall under deſpondency: but the teachings of the Father are encouraging teachings: they are carried on from ſtrength to ſtrength againſt all the oppoſitions they meet from without them, and the many diſcouragements they find within them: to this concluſion they are brought by the teaching of God, *we muſt have Chriſt, we muſt get a pardon, we muſt ſtrive for ſalvation, let the difficulties, troubles and ſufferings in the way be never ſo great or many.* As he ſaid, *neceſſe eſt ut eam, non ut vivam:* 'tis neceſſary that I go on, 'tis not neceſſary that I live: ſo ſaith the ſoul that is taught of God; 'tis eaſier with me to diſpenſe with eaſe, honour, relations; yea, with life it ſelf, than to part with Chriſt and the hopes of eternal life.

Leſſon 12.

Twelfthly, *They that come to Chriſt are taught of God, that whatever guilt and unworthineſs they diſcover in themſelves, and whatever fears and doubts hang upon their hearts as to pardon and acceptance;*

acceptance; yet as the caſe ſtands it is their wiſdom and great intereſt to venture themſelves in the way of faith upon Jeſus Chriſt, whatever the iſſue thereof be.

Three great diſcouragements are uſually found upon the hearts of thoſe that come to Chriſt in the way of faith.

Firſt, The ſenſible greatneſs of guilt and ſin, how can I go to Chriſt that am in ſuch a caſe, that have been ſo vile a wretch? and here meaſuring the grace and mercy of Chriſt by what it finds in it ſelf, or in other creatures, 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. the ſoul is ready to ſink under the weight of its own diſcouraging and miſgiving thoughts.

Secondly, The ſenſe they have of their own weakneſs, and inability to do what God requires, and muſt of neceſſity be done, if ever they be ſaved: my heart is harder than an Adamant, how can I break it? My will is ſtubborn and exceeding obſtinate, I am no way able to bow it; the frame and temper of my ſpirit is altogether carnal and earthly; and it is not in the power of my hand to alter and change it: alas I cannot ſubdue any one corruption, nor perform one ſpiritual duty, nor bear one of thoſe ſufferings and burthens which religion lays upon all that follow Chriſt: this alſo proves a great diſcouragement in the way of faith.

Thirdly, And which is more than all, the ſoul that is coming to Jeſus Chriſt, hath no aſſurance of acceptance with him, if it ſhould adventure himſelf upon him: 'tis a great hazard, a great adventure; 'tis much more probable (if I look to my ſelf) that Chriſt will ſhut the door of mercy againſt me.

But under all theſe diſcouragements the ſoul learns this Leſſon from God, that as ungodly as it is, as weak and impotent as it is, as full of fears and doubts as it is: nevertheleſs it is every way its great duty and concernment to go on in the way of faith, and make that great adventure of it ſelf upon Jeſus Chriſt: and of this the Lord convinceth the ſoul by two things.

viz.
1. From the abſolute neceſſity of coming.
2. From the incouraging probabilities of ſpeeding.

Firſt, The ſoul ſeeth an abſolute neceſſity of coming; ne-

ceſſity is laid upon it, there is no other way, *Acts.* 4. 12. God hath ſhut it up by a bleſſed neceſſity to this only dore of eſcape, *Gal.* 3. 23. damnation lies in the neglect of Chriſt, *Heb.* 2. 3. The ſoul hath no choice in this caſe, Angels, Miniſters, duties, repentance, reformation cannot ſave me, Chriſt, and none but Chriſt can deliver me from preſent guilt and the wrath to come: why do I diſpute, demur, delay, when certain ruine muſt inevitably follow the neglect or refuſal of Goſpel offers?

Secondly, The Lord ſheweth thoſe that are under his teaching the probabilities of mercy for their encouragement in the way of believing: and theſe probabilities the ſoul is enabled to gather from the general and free invitations of the Goſpel, *Iſai.* 55. 1, 7. *Rev.* 22. 17. from the conditional promiſes of the Goſpel, *Joh.* 6. 37. *Mat.* 11. 28. *Iſai.* 1. 18. from the vaſt extent of grace beyond all the thoughts and hopes of creatures, *Iſai.* 55. 8, 9. *Heb.* 7. 25. from the incouraging examples of other ſinners who have found mercy in as bad condition as they, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. 2 *Chron.* 33. 3. 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11. from the Command of God which warrants the action, and anſwers all the objections of unworthineſs and preſumption in them that come to Chriſt, 1 *John* 3. 23. and laſtly, from the ſenſible changes already made upon the temper and frame of the heart. Time was when I had no ſenſe of ſin, nor ſorrow for ſin; no deſires after Chriſt, nor heart to duties; but it is not ſo with me now. I now ſee the evil of ſin, ſo as I never ſaw it before; my heart is now broken in the ſenſe of that evil: my deſires begin to be enflamed after Jeſus Chriſt. I am not at reſt, nor where I would be, till I am in ſecret mourning after the Lord Jeſus. Surely theſe are the dawnings of the day of mercy: let me go on in this way; it ſaith as the Lepers at the ſiege of *Samaria*, 2 *King.* 7. 3, 4. If I ſtay here I periſh, if I go to Chriſt, I can but periſh. Hence Believers bear up againſt all objected diſcouragements, *certum exitium commutemus incerto*, 'tis the dictate of wiſdom, the vote of reaſon; to exchange a certain for an uncertain ruine. And thus you have heard what thoſe excellent Leſſons are which all that come to Chriſt are taught by the Father.

The

The Twenty third SERMON.

Sermon 23.

JOHN 6. 45. Text.

It is written in the prophets, And they ſhall be all taught of God: every man therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

IN the former Sermon, you have been taught this great truth:

Doct.

That the teachings of God are abſolutely neceſſary to every ſoul that cometh unto Chriſt in the way of faith.

What the teachings of God import, hath been formerly opened: and what thoſe ſpecial Leſſons are, which all believers hear and learn of the Father, was the laſt thing diſcourſed: that which remains to be further cleared about this ſubject, before I come to the Application of the whole, will be to ſhew you,

1. What

1. What are the Properties of divine teachings.
2. What influence they have in bringing ſouls to Chriſt.
3. Why it is impoſſible for any man to come to Chriſt without theſe teachings of the Father.

1. Firſt, what are the properties of divine teachings. Concerning the teachings of God we affirm in general that though they exclude not, yet they vaſtly differ from all humane teachings: as the *power* of God in *effecting* tranſcends all humane power, ſo the wiſdom of God in *teaching* tranſcends all humane *wiſdom*. For,

Firſt, God teacheth *powerfully*: he ſpeaketh to the ſoul with a ſtrong hand; when the word comes accompanied with the Spirit, 'tis mighty through God, to caſt down all imaginations, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. Now the Goſpel *comes not in word only* (as it was wont to do) *but in power*, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 4, 5. a power that makes the ſoul fall flat before it, and acknowledge that God is in that word, 1 *Cor.* 14. 25.

Secondly, the teachings of God are *ſweet teachings*. Men never reliſh the ſweetneſs of a truth, till they learn it from God, *Cant.* 1. 3. His name is as an Oyntment poured forth, *Cant.* 5. 16. his mouth is moſt ſweet. O how powerfully, and how ſweetly doth the voyce of God ſlide into the heart of a poor melting ſinner! how jejune, dry, and taſtleſs are all the diſcourſes of men, compared with the teachings of the Father!

Thirdly, God teacheth *plainly and clearly*, he not only opens truths to the underſtanding, but he openeth the underſtanding alſo to perceive them, 2 *Cor.* 3. 16. In that day the vaile is taken away from the heart: a light ſhineth into the ſoul: a clear beam from heaven is darted into the mind, *Luk.* 24. 45. Divine teachings are fully ſatisfying: the ſoul doubts no more, ſtaggers and heſitates no more, but *acquieſces* in that which God teaches: 'tis ſo ſatisfied that it can venture all upon the truth of what it hath learnt from God, as that *Martyr* ſaid, *I cannot diſpute, but I can dye for Chriſt*. See *Prov.* 8. 8, 9.

Fourthly, The teachings of God are *infallible teachings*, the wiſeſt and holieſt of men may miſtake, and lead others into the ſame miſtakes with themſelves; but it is not ſo in the teachings of God: if we can be ſure that God teacheth

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us, we may be as ſure of the truth of what he teacheth, for his ſpirit *guideth us into all truth*, *Joh.* 16. 13. and into nothing but truth.

Fifthly, The teachings of God are *abiding teachings*, they make everlaſting impreſſions upon the ſoul, *Pſal.* 119. 98. *they are ever with it*: the words of men vaniſh from us; but the words of God ſtick by us: what God teacheth he writeth upon the heart, *Jer.* 31. 33. and that will abide: *littera ſcripta manet*. 'Tis uſual with ſouls whoſe underſtandings have been opened by the Lord, many years afterward to ſay, I ſhall never forget ſuch a ſcripture that once convinced me, ſuch a promiſe that once encouraged me.

Sixthly, The teachings of God are *ſaving teachings*, they make the ſoul wiſe unto Salvation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. There is a great deal of other knowledge that goes to hell with men: the pavement of hell (as one ſpeaks) is pitched with the ſculs of many great *Scholars*, but eternal life is in the teachings of God. *Joh.* 17. 3. *This is eternal life to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* This is deſervedly ſtiled the light of life, *Joh.* 8. 12. in this light we ſhall ſee light, *Pſal.* 36. 9.

Seventhly, The teachings of God make their own way into the dulleſt and weakeſt capacities, *Iſa.* 32. 4. *The heart alſo of the raſh ſhall underſtand knowledge, and the tongue of the ſtammerers ſhall be ready to ſpeak plainly*: upon this account Chriſt ſaid, *Mat.* 11. 25. *I thank thee O father Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes*: 'tis admirable to ſee what clear illumination ſome poor illiterate Chriſtians have in the myſteries of Chriſt and Salvation, which others of great abilities, deep and ſearching heads can never diſcover with all their learning and ſtudy.

Eighthly, To conclude, the teachings of God are *transforming teachings*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. they change the ſoul into the ſame image: God caſts them whom he teacheth into the very mould of thoſe truths which they learn from him, *Rom.* 6. 17. Theſe are the teachings of God, and thus he inſtructeth thoſe that come to Chriſt.

Secondly, Next let us ſee what influences divine teachings have upon ſouls in bringing them to Chriſt: and we ſhall find a threefold influence in them. 1. They 2.

1. They have an influence upon the external means by which they come to Christ.
2. They have influence upon the mind to remove what hindered it from Christ.
3. They have influence upon the will to allure and draw it to Christ.

First, They have influence upon the *means* by which we come to Christ: the best ordinances are but a dead letter, except the spirit, the teaching and quickening spirit of God work in fellowship with them, 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. The best Ministers like the Disciples cast forth the Net, but take nothing, win not one soul to God, till God teach as well as they. *Paul* is nothing and *Apollo* nothing, but God that giveth the increase, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. Let the most learned, eloquent and powerful Orator be in the Pulpit, yet no mans heart is perswaded till it hears the voice of God; *cathedram in cœlis habet qui corda docet.*

Secondly, They have influence upon the *mind* to remove what hindered it from Christ; except the minds of men be first untaught those errors by which they are prejudiced against Christ, they will never be perswaded to come unto him: and nothing but the Fathers teachings can unteach those errors, and cure those evils of the mind: the natural mind of man slights the truths of God untill God teach them; and then they tremble with an awful reverence of them. Sin is but a trifle till God shews us the face of it in the glass of the Law, and then it appears *exceeding sinful*, *Rom.* 7. 13. We think God to be such a one as our selves, *Psal.* 50. 21. until he discover himself unto us in his infinite greatness, awful holiness, and severe Justice; and then we cry, who can stand before this great and dreadful God! We thought it was time enough hereafter to mind the concernments of another world, untill the Lord open our eyes, to see in what danger we stand upon the very brink of eternity; and then nothing scares us more than the fears that our time will be finished before the great work of Salvation be finished. We thought our selves in a converted State before, till God make us to see the necessity of another manner of conversation upon pain of eternal damnation. We readily caught hold upon the

the promiſes before, when we had no right to them; but the teachings of God make the preſumptuous ſinner let go his hold, that he may take a better and ſurer hold of them in Chriſt. We once thought that the death of Chriſt in it ſelf had been enough to ſecure our Salvation; but under the teachings of God, we diſcern plainly the neceſſity of a change of heart and ſtate; or elſe the blood of Chriſt can never profit us. Thus the teachings of God remove the errors of the mind by which men are withheld from Chriſt.

Thirdly, The teachings of God powerfully attract and allure the will of a ſinner to Chriſt, *Hoſ.* 2. 14. But of theſe drawings of the father I have largely ſpoken before, and therefore ſhall ſay no more of it in this place, but haſten to the laſt thing propounded, *viz.*

Thirdly, why it is impoſſible for any man to come to Chriſt without the Fathers teachings: and the impoſſibilities hereof will appear three ways.

1. From the power of ſin.
2. From the indiſpoſition of man.
3. From the nature of faith.

By all which the Laſt point deſigned to be ſpoken to from this Scripture will be fully cleared, and the whole prepared for application.

Firſt, The impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt without the teachings of the Father will appear from the power of ſin, which hath ſo ſtrong an holdfaſt upon the hearts and affections of all unregenerate men, that no humane arguments or perſwaſions whatſoever can divorce or ſeparate them; for

Firſt, ſin is connatural with the ſoul, 'tis born and bred with a man: *Pſal.* 51. 5. *Iſa.* 48. 8. It is as natural for fallen man to ſin as it is to breath.

Secondly, The power of ſin hath been ſtrengthening it ſelf from the beginning, by a long continued Cuſtom, which gives it the force of a ſecond nature; and makes regeneration and mortification naturally impoſſible. *Jer.* 15. 23. *Can the Æthiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? Then may he alſo do good that is accuſtomed to do evil.*

Thirdly, Sin is the delight of the ſinner: *it is a ſport to a fool to do miſchief, Prov.* 10. 23. Carnal men have no other pleaſure in this world, but what ariſes from their Luſts: to cut off their corruptions by mortification, were at once to deprive them of all the pleaſure of their lives.

Fourthly, ſin being connatural, cuſtomary, and delightful, doth therefore bewitch their affections and inchant their hearts to that degree of madneſs and faſcination; that they rather chooſe damnation by God, than ſeparation from ſin: *their hearts are fully ſet in them to do evil, Eccleſ.* 8. 11. they ruſh into ſin, as the *horſe ruſheth into the battle, Jer.* 8. 6. And now what think you can ſeparate a man from his beloved Luſt, except the powerful and effectual teachings of God? Nothing but a light from heaven can rectifie and reduce the inchanted mind, no power but that of God can change and alter the ſinful bent and inclination of the will, 'tis a task above all Creature power.

Secondly, The impoſſibility of coming to Chriſt without the Fathers teachings evidently appears from the *indiſpoſedneſs* of man, the ſubject of this change: *the natural man receives not the things which are of God*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Three things muſt be wrought upon man, before ever he can come to Chriſt: his blind underſtanding muſt be enlightned; his hard and rocky heart muſt be broken, and melted; his ſtiff, fixed and obſtinate will muſt be conquered, and ſubdued: but all theſe are the effects of a ſupernatural power. The illumination of the mind is the peculiar work of God, 2. *Cor.* 4. 6. *Rev.* 3. 17. *Eph.* 5. 8. The breaking and melting of the heart is the Lords own work; 'tis he that giveth repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. 'Tis the Lord that *takes away the heart of ſtone, and giveth an heart of fleſh, Ezek.* 36. 26. 'tis he that poureth out the ſpirit of contrition upon man, *Zech.* 12. 10. The changing of the natural bent and inclination of the will is the Lords ſole prerogative., *Phil.* 2. 13. all theſe things are effectually done in the ſoul of man when God teacheth it, and never till then.

Thirdly, The nature of faith by which we come to Chriſt plainly ſhows the impoſſibility of coming without the Fathers teaching. Every thing in faith is ſupernatural: the implantation of the *habit* of faith is ſo, *Eph.* 2. 8. 'tis not of

of our ſelves but the gift of God: 'tis not an habit *acquired* by induſtry, but *infuſed* by grace, *Phil.* 1. 29. The *light* of faith by which ſpiritual things are diſcerned is ſupernatural, *Heb.* 11. 1. 27. It ſeeth things that are inviſible. The *adventures* of faith are ſupernatural; for *againſt hope, a man* believeth *in hope giving glory to God, Rom.* 4. 18. By faith a man goeth unto Chriſt againſt all the dictates and diſcouragements of natural ſenſe and reaſon. The *ſelf-denyal* of faith is ſupernatural: the cutting off of the right hand, and plucking out of right eye ſins muſt needs be ſo, *Matth.* 5. 29. The *Victories* and conqueſts of faith do all ſpeak it to be ſupernatural; it overcomes the ſtrongeſt oppoſitions from without, *Heb.* 11. 33, 34. it ſubdueth and purgeth the moſt obſtinate and deep rooted corruptions within, *Acts* 15. 9. it overcometh all the blandiſhments, and charming allurements of the bewitching world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. all which conſidered, how evident is the concluſion, that none can come to Chriſt without the Fathers teachings? The uſes follow.

1. *Uſe for Information.* *Uſe* 1.

Inference. 1.

How notoriouſly falſe and abſurd is that doctrin which aſſerteth the poſſibility of believing without the efficacy of ſupernatural grace? *Inference* 1. The deſire of ſelf-ſufficiency was the ruin of *Adam*, and the conceit of ſelf-ſufficiency is the ruin of multitudes of his poſterity. This doctrine is not only contradictory to the current ſtream of Scripture, *Phil.* 2. 13. 1 *Joh.* 1. 13. with many other Scriptures: but it is alſo contradictory to the common ſenſe and experience of believers: yet the pride of nature will ſtrive to maintain, what Scripture and experience plainly contradict and overthrow.

Infer. 2.

Hence we may alſo inform our ſelves how it cometh to paſs that many rational, wiſe and learned men miſs Chriſt, whilſt mean time the ſimple and illiterate even babes in natural knowledge, obtain intereſt in him and ſalvation by him. *Inference* 2.

The reason hereof is plainly given us by Christ in *Mat.* 13. 11. *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given*: 'tis the droppings and dews of divine teaching upon one, and not upon another, that dryeth up the green tree, and maketh the dry tree to flourish. Many natural men have very fine brains, searching wits, solid judgements, nimble fancies, tenacious memories: they can search out the mysteries of nature, solve the *Phænomena*, satisfie the enquiries of the most curious: they can measure the earth, discover the motions of the heavens; but after all take up their place in Hell: When in the mean time *the Statutes of the Lord* (by the help of his teachings) *make wise the simple*, *Psal.* 19. 17. 'Tis no matter how dull and incapable the Scholar be, if God undertake to be the teacher. I remember *Austin* speaks of one who was commonly reputed a fool, and yet he could not but judge him to be truly godly; and that by two signs of grace which appeared in him: one was his seriousness when he heard any discourses of Christ, the other was his indignation manifested against sin; it was truly said by those two *Cardinals* (who riding to the Council of *Constance* overheard a poor shepherd in the fields, with tears bewailing his sin) *surgunt indocti & rapient cœlum*: the unlearned will rise and take heaven, whilest we with all our learning shall descend into Hell.

Infer. 3.

Inference 3. *This also informs us of the true reason of the strange and various successes of the Gospel upon the souls of men*: here we see why the ministry of one man becomes fruitful, and anothers barren: Yea, why the labours of the same man prosper exceedingly at one time, and not at another: these things are according as the teachings of God do accompany our teachings: we often see a weaker and plainer discourse blessed with success, whilst that which is more artificial, neat, and laboured comes to nothing. St. *Austin* hath a pretty similitude to illustrate this, Suppose (saith he) two *Conduits*, the one very plain, the other curiously carved and adorned with images of Lyons, Eagles, *&c.* the water doth not refresh and nourish as

as it cometh from such a curious *Conduit*; but as it is water. Where we find most of man, we frequently find least of God. I speak not this to encourage carelesness and lazyness, but to provoke the dispensers of the Gospel to more earnestness, and fervent prayer for the assistance and blessing of the Spirit upon their labours; and to make men less fond of their own gifts and abilities: blear-eyed *Leah* may bear Children, when beautiful *Rachel* proves barren.

Inference 4.

Learn hence the transcendent excellency of saving spiritual knowledge, above that which is meerly literal and natural. One drop of knowledge taught by God is more excellent than the whole Ocean of humane knowledge and acquired gifts, *Phil.* 3. 8. *Joh.* 17. 3. 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. Let no man therefore be dejected at the want of those gifts with which unsanctified men are adorned. If God have taught thee the evil of sin, the worth of Christ, the necessity of Regeneration, the mystery of faith, the way of communion with God in duties; trouble not thy self because of thine ignorance in natural or moral things: thou hast that, Reader, which will bring thee to Heaven: and he is a truly wise man that knows the way of salvation, though he be ignorant and unskilful in other things: thou knowest that which all the learned *Doctors* and *Libraries* in the world could never teach thee, but God hath revealed them to thee: others have more *science*, thou hast more *savour* and sweetness: bless God and be not discouraged. *Inference* 4.

2*d Use for Examination.*

If there be no coming to Christ without the teachings of the Father: then it greatly concerns us to examine our own hearts, whether ever we have been under the saving teachings of God, during the many years we have sate under the preaching of the Gospel. Let not the question be mistaken, I do not ask what Books you have read, what Ministers you have heard, what stock of natural or speculative knowledge you have acquired: but the question is, whether ever God spake to your hearts, and hath effectually taught you such lessons *Use* 2.

lessons as were mentioned in our last discourse. O there is a vast difference betwixt that notional, speculative and traditional knowledge which man learneth from man, and that spiritual, operative and transforming knowledge which a man learneth from God. If you ask how the teachings of God may be discerned from all other meer humane teachings, I answer, it may be discerned and distinguished by these six signs.

Sign 1.

The teachings of God are very humbling to the soul that is taught. Humane knowledge puffeth up, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. but the teachings of God do greatly abase the soul, Job 42. 5. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes:* the same light which discovers to us the holiness, justice, greatness and goodness of God, discovereth also the vileness, baseness, emptiness and total unworthiness of man: yea, of the best and holiest of men, *Isa.* 6. 5.

Sign 2.

The teachings of God are deeply affecting, and impressive teachings: they fully reach the heart of man, Hos. 2. 14. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably unto her:* or as it is in the Hebrew, I will speak to her heart. When God showeth unto man the evil of sin, he so convinceth the soul that no creature comforts have any pleasure or sweetness in them: and when he sheweth unto man his righteousness, pardon and peace in Christ, he so comforteth and refresheth the heart, that no outward afflictions have any weight or bitterness in them: one drop of consolation from Heaven, sweetens a Sea of trouble upon Earth, Psal. 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.*

Sign 3.

Sign 3.

The teachings of God are ſanctifying and renewing teachings: they reform and change the heart, Eph. 4. 21, 22, 23. *If ſo be that you have heard him, and been taught by him as the truth is in Jeſus: that ye put off concerning the former converſation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Luſts; and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind,* &c. See here what holineſs and purity is the effect of divine teaching: holineſs both external and internal, negative and poſitive: holineſs of every kind follows the Fathers teachings: all the diſcoveries God makes to us of himſelf in Chriſt have an aſſimulating quality, and change the ſoul into their own likeneſs, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Sign 4.

All Gods teachings are practical, running into obedience. Idle notions and uſeleſs ſpeculations are not learnt from God. As Gods creating words, ſo his teaching words are with effect: as when he ſaid *let there be light,* and there was light: ſo when he ſaith to the ſoul, be comforted, be humbled; it is effectually comforted, *Iſa.* 66. 13. it is humbled, *Job* 40. 4, 5. As God hath in nature made no creature in vain, ſo he ſpeaks no word in vain: every thing which men hear, or learn from the Father is for uſe, practice and benefit to the ſoul.

Sign 5.

All the teachings of God are agreeable with the written word: the Spirit of God, and the word of God do never jarr, Joh. 14. 26. *He ſhall take of mine and ſhew it unto you:* When God ſpeaketh unto the heart of man, whether in a way of conviction, conſolation or inſtruction in duty, he always either maketh uſe of the expreſs words of God in Scripture, or ſpeaks to the heart in language every way conſentaneous and agreeable to Scripture: So that the written word becomes the *Standard* to weigh, and try all divine teachings, Iſa. 8. 20. *To the law, and to the teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light* (or morning) *in them:*

them: whatever is discrepant and jarring with the Scripture, must not pass for an inspiration of God, but a deluding sophism and insinuation of Satan.

Sign 6.

The teachings of God are very satisfying teachings to the soul of man: the understanding faculty like a *Dial* is enlightned with the beams of divine truth shining upon it: this no mans teachings can do, men can only teach *objectively*, by propounding truth to the understanding; but they cannot enlighten the faculty it self as God doth, 1 *John* 5. 20. he giveth man understanding as well as instructions to be understood: he opens the eyes of the understanding, as well as propoundeth the object, *Eph.* 1. 18. And thus we may discern and distinguish the teachings of God, from all other teachings.

3*d Use of Exhortation.*

Use 3. The last use I shall make of this point, shall be a word of *exhortation:* both to them that never were yet effectually taught of God, and to them also that have heard his voice, and are come to Christ.

First, To those that never yet heard the voice of God speaking to their hearts: and truly this is the general case of most men and women in the professing world: they have heard the sound of the Gospel, but it hath been a confused, empty and ineffectual sound in their ears: we have heard the voice of man, but have never yet heard the voice of God: the gifts and abilities of Preachers have in a notional and meer humane way improved their understandings, and sometimes slightly touched their affections: all this is but the effect of man upon man. O that you would look for something which is beyond all this: satisfie not your selves with what is meerly natural, and humane in ordinances; come to the word with higher ends and more spiritual designs, than to get some notions of truth which you had not before, or to judge the gifts and abilities of the speaker: if God speak not to your hearts, all the Ordinances in the world can do you no good, 1 *Cor.* 3. 7. O remember what a solemn and awful thing

thing it is to come to those Ordinances, and attend upon that Ministration in and by which the eternal decrees of Heaven are to be executed upon your souls, which must be to you the *savour of life unto life, or of death unto death*; wrastle with God by prayer for a blessing upon the Ordinances. Say, Lord, speak thy self to my heart, let me hear thy voice, and feel thy power in this Prayer, or in this Sermon: others have heard thy voice, cause me to hear it: it had been much better for me if I had never heard the voice of Preachers, except I hear thy voice in them.

Secondly, Let all those that have heard the voice of God, and are come to Christ in the vertue of his teachings, admire the wonderful condescension of God to them. O that God should speak to thy soul and be silent to others! there be many thousands living at this day under Ordinances, to whom the Lord hath not given an ear to hear, or an heart to obey, Deut. 29. 4. *To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given*, Mat. 13. 11. and I beseech you walk as men and women that have been taught of God. When *Satan* and your corruptions tempt you to sin, and to walk in the wayes of the carnal and careless world; remember then that Scripture, Eph. 4. 20, 21. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.* To conclude, see that you be exceeding humble and lowly in Spirit: humility qualifies you for divine teachings, Psal. 25. 9. *The humble he will teach: and the more ye are taught of God, the more humble you will still be.*

And thus you see that no man can come to Christ without the *application of the Law*, and *the teachings of the Father:* which being considered, may be very useful to convince us (which indeed is the design of it) that among the multitudes of men and women, living under the Ordinances of God, and the general profession of Religion; there are but few, very few to be found, who have effectually received the Lord Jesus Christ by saving faith.

And now, Reader, I suppose by this time thou art desirous to know by what signs and evidences thy union with Christ by faith may be cleared up and made evident to thee: and how that great question whether thou hast yet effectual-

ly applied Christ to thy soul or no may be clearly decided; which brings me to the third general Use of the whole, *viz.*

The Examination of our Interest in Christ.

By
1. The donation of the Spirit, from 1 *Joh.* 3. 24.
2. The new Creation, from 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.
3. The mortification of sin, from *Gal.* 5. 24.
4. The imitation of Christ, from 1 *Joh.* 2. 6.

Of each of these Trials of our interest in Christ I shall speak in their order: and first of the donation of the Spirit.

The

The Twenty fourth SERMON.

Sermon 24.

1 JOHN 3. 24.

———*And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

Text.

Of the manner and importance of the Spirits indwelling.

THE Apoſtle in this Chapter is engaged in a very trying Diſcourſe: his ſcope is to diſcriminate the ſpirits and ſtates of ſincere Believers, from meerly nominal and pretended Chriſtians; which he attempts not to do by any thing that is external, but by the internal effects and operations of the Spirit of God upon their hearts. His enquiry is not into thoſe things which men profeſs, or about the duties which they perform, but about the frames and tempers of their hearts, and the principles by which they are acted in religion. According to this Teſt he puts Believers upon the ſearch and ſtudy of their own hearts: calls them to reflect upon the effects and operations of the Spirit of God wrought within their own ſouls: aſſuring them that thoſe gracious effects and fruits of the Spirit in their hearts will be a ſolid evidence unto them of their union with Jeſus Chriſt; amounting to much more than a

general conjectural ground of hope, under which it is possible there may *subesse falsum* lurk a dangerous and fatal mistake: but the gracious effects of the Spirit of God within them, are a foundation upon which they may build the certainty and assurance of their union with Christ: *hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us.* In which words we have three things to consider.

viz.
1. The thing to be tried, our Union with Christ.
2. The trial of it, by the giving of his Spirit to us.
3. The certainty of the trial this way: *hereby we know.*

1. First, The thing to be tried, which indeed is the greatest and weightiest matter that can be brought to tryal in this world or in that to come, namely our union with Christ, expressed here by *his abiding in us*, a phrase clearly expressing the difference betwixt those that by profession and common estimation pass for Christians among men, though they have no other union with Christ, but by an *external adhesion* to him in the outside duties of Religion: and those whose union with Christ is real, vital and permanent, by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in their souls. *Joh.* 15. 5, 6. opens the force and importance of this phrase, *I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him; the same bringeth forth much fruit: if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered:* the thing then to be tried, is whether we stand in Christ as dead branches in a living stock, which are only bound to it by external ligatures or bonds that hold them for a while together: or whether our souls have a vital union and coalition with Christ by the participation of the living sap of that blessed root.

Secondly, The trial of this union, which is by the *giving of the Spirit to us:* the Spirit of Christ is the very bond of Union betwixt him and our souls. I mean not that the very person of the Spirit dwelleth in us, imparting his *essential properties* to us: it were a rude blasphemy so to speak; but his saving influences are communicated to us in the way of sanctifying operations: as the Sun is said to come into the House, when his beams and comforting influences come there. Nor yet must we think that the graces or influences of the Spirit abide in

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us in the ſelf ſame meaſure and manner as they do in Chriſt: *for God giveth not the Spirit to him by meaſure*: in him all fullneſs dwells: he is anointed with the Spirit above his fellows: but there are meaſures and proportions of grace differently communicated to Believers by the ſame Spirit: and theſe communicated graces and real operations of the Spirit of grace in our hearts, do undoubtedly prove the reality of our union with Chriſt; as the communication of the ſelf-ſame vital juice or ſap of the ſtock to the branch whereby it lives, and brings forth fruit of the ſame kind, certainly proves it to be a real part or member of the ſame tree.

Thirdly, Which brings us to the third thing; namely the certainty of the trial this way, ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν in this, or *by this we know*: we ſo know that we cannot be deceived. To clear this, let us conſider two things in grace,

viz. { 1. Somewhat *Conſtitutive* / 2. Somewhat *Manifeſtative* } of its being.

There is ſomething in grace which is eſſential and *conſtitutive* of its being: and ſomewhat that flows from grace, and is *manifeſtative* of ſuch a being: we cannot immediately and intuitively diſcern the eſſence of grace as it is in its ſimple nature. So God only diſcerns it, who is the author of it: but we may diſcern it *mediately* and *ſecondarily* by the effects and operations of it. Could we ſee the ſimple eſſence of grace, or intuitively diſcern our union with Chriſt, our knowledge would be *demonſtrative*, *à priori ad poſterius*, by ſeeing the effects as they are lodged in their cauſe: but we come to know the being of grace, and the reality of our union with Chriſt, *à poſteriori*, by aſcending in our knowledge from the effects and operations, to their true cauſe and being.

And accordingly God hath furniſhed us with a power of ſelf-intuition and reflection: whereby we are able to turn in upon our own hearts and make a judgement upon our ſelves, and upon our own acts. The ſoul hath not only a power to *project*, but a power alſo to *reflect* upon its own actions: not only

only to put forth a *direct act* of faith upon Jeſus Chriſt, but to judge and diſcern that act alſo: 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed:* and this is the way in which believers attain their certainty and knowledge of their Union with Chriſt: from hence the Obſervation will be,

Doct. DOCT.

That intereſt in Chriſt may be certainly gathered, and concluded from the gift of the ſpirit to us: no man (ſaith the Apoſtle) *hath ſeen God at any time: if we love one another, God dwelleth in us; and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit,* 1 Joh. 4. 12, 13. The being of God is inviſible, but the operations of his Spirit in believers are ſenſible and diſcernable. The ſouls union with Chriſt is a ſupernatural myſtery, yet is it diſcoverable by the effects thereof, which are very perceptible in and by believers. Two things require Explication, and Confirmation in the Doctrinal part of this point.

1. What the giving of the Spirit imports and ſignifies.
2. How it evidences the ſouls intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt.

1. Firſt, As to the importance of this phraſe we are to enquire what is meant by the Spirit, and what by the giving of the Spirit.

Now the Spirit is taken in Scripture two wayes.

viz. Eſſentially or Perſonally.

In the firſt ſence it is put for the God-head, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Juſtified in the Spirit,* (i. e.) by the power of his Divine Nature, which raiſed him from the dead. In the ſecond ſenſe it denotes the third perſon, or ſubſiſtence in the glorious and bleſſed Trinity, and to him this word *Spirit* is attributed, ſometimes *properly* in the ſence before mentioned, as denoting his *perſonality*; at other times *metonymically*, and then it is put for the

the effects, fruits, graces, and gifts of the Spirit, communicated by him unto men: Eph. 5. 11. *be ye filled with the Spirit.* Now the fruits or gifts of the Spirit are either,

1. Common, and assisting gifts,
or
2. Special, and sanctifying gifts.

In the last sence and signification, it must be taken in this place: for as to the common, assisting and ministring gifts of the Spirit, they are bestowed promiscuously upon one as well as another. Such gifts in an excellent degree, and large measure are found in the unregenerate, and therefore can never amount to a solid evidence of the souls union with Christ: but his special sanctifying gifts being the proper effect and consequent of that Union, must needs strongly prove and confirm it. In this sense therefore we are to understand *the Spirit* in this place: and by giving the spirit to us we are to understand more than the *coming of the spirit upon us:* the spirit of God is said to come upon men in a transient way, for their present assistance in some particular service; though in themselves they be unsanctified persons: thus *the spirit of God came upon Balaam*, Numb. 24. 2. enabling him to propheſie of things to come; and although those extraordinary gifts of the spirit be now ceased, yet the spirit ceaseth not to give his ordinary assistances unto men, both regenerate and unregenerate, 1 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9, 10, 31. compared: but whatever gifts he gives to others, he is said to *be given, to dwell,* and *to abide* only in believers, 1 Cor. 3. 16: *know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* an expression denoting both his special propriety in them, and gracious familiarity with them: there is a great difference betwixt the *assisting* and the *indwelling* of the spirit: the one is *transient,* the other *permanent.* That is a good rule the Schoolmen give us, *illa tantum dicuntur inesse, quæ insunt per modum quietis:* those things are only said to be in a man, which are in him by way of rest, and permanency, and so the spirit is in believers: therefore they are said *to live in the spirit,* Gal. 5. 25. to be *led by the spirit,* ver. 18. to *be in the spirit,* and the spirit to dwell in them, *Rom.* 8. 9. And so much

much of the firſt thing to be opened, *viz.* what we are to underſtand by the giving of the ſpirit.

2. Secondly, In the next place we are to enquire and ſatisfie our ſelves, how this giving of the ſpirit evidently proves, and ſtrongly concludes that ſouls intereſt in Chriſt unto whom he is given: and this will evidently appear by the conſideration of theſe five particulars.

Firſt, The ſpirit of God in believers is the very *bond* by which they are united unto Chriſt; if therefore we find in our ſelves the bond of union, we may warrantably conclude that we have union with Jeſus Chriſt: this is evidently held forth in thoſe words of Chriſt: Joh. 17. 22, 23. *The glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them as thou haſt loved me:* 'tis the glory of Chriſts humane nature to be united to the God-head: this glory (ſaid Chriſt) thou gaveſt me, and the glory thou gaveſt me I have given them (*i. e.*) by me they are united unto thee: and how this is done he ſheweth us more particularly, *I in them:* there is Chriſt in us, viz. *myſtically*; and *thou in me* there is God in Chriſt, viz. *Hypoſtatically:* ſo that in Chriſt God and believers meet in a bleſſed union: 'tis Chriſts glory to be one with God: 'tis our glory to be one with Chriſt, and with God by him: but how is this done? certainly no other way but by the giving of his Spirit unto us: for ſo much that phraſe *I in them* muſt needs import: Chriſt is in us by the ſanctifying ſpirit which is the *bond* of our union with him.

Secondly, The Scripture every where makes this giving or indwelling of the ſpirit the great mark and tryal of our intereſt in Chriſt; concluding from the preſence of it in us, *poſitively* as in the Text; and from the abſence of it, *negatively*, as in Rom. 8. 9. *now if any man have not the ſpirit of Chriſt, the ſame is none of his*; Jude ver. 19. *ſenſual, not having the ſpirit*; this mark therefore agreeing to all believers, and to none but believers; and that alwayes, and at all times: it muſt needs clearly inferr the ſouls union with Chriſt in whomſoever it is found.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That which is a certain mark of our freedom from the Covenant of works, and our title to the priviledges of the Covenant of grace, muſt needs alſo inferr our Union with Chriſt, and ſpecial intereſt in him: but the giving or indwelling of the ſanctifying ſpirit in us, is a certain mark of our freedom from the *firſt Covenant* under which all Chriſtleſs perſons ſtill ſtand; and our title to the ſpecial priviledges of the *ſecond Covenant* in which none but the members of Chriſt are intereſted: and conſequently it fully proves our Union with the Lord Jeſus. This is plain from the *Apoſtles* reaſoning, Gal. 4. 6, 7. *And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the ſpirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba father: wherefore thou art no more a ſervant, but a ſon; and if a ſon, then an heir of God through Chriſt.* The ſpirit of the firſt Covenant was a ſervile ſpirit, a ſpirit of fear and bondage, and they that were under that Covenant were not *Sons* but *Servants*; but the Spirit of the New Covenant is a free, ingenuous ſpirit, acting in the ſtrength of God, and thoſe that do ſo are the Children of God: and Children inherit the bleſſed priviledges, and royal immunities contained in that great Charter the Covenant of Grace; they are *heirs of God*, and the evidence of this their inheritance by vertue of the ſecond Covenant, and of their freedom from the ſervitude and bondage of the firſt Covenant, is *the ſpirit of Chriſt in their hearts crying Abba father:* So Gal. 5. 18. *if ye be led by the ſpirit ye are not under the Law.*

Fourthly, If the eternal decree of Gods electing love be executed, and the vertues and benefits of the death of Chriſt applyed by the ſpirit, unto every ſoul in whom he dwelleth as a ſpirit of ſanctification; then ſuch a giving of the ſpirit unto us muſt needs be a certain mark and proof of our ſpecial intereſt in Chriſt: but the decree of Gods electing love is executed, and the benefits of the blood of Chriſt are applyed unto every ſoul in whom he dwelleth as a ſpirit of ſanctification. This is plain from 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the father through ſanctification of the ſpirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt:* where you ſee both Gods election executed, and the blood of Jeſus ſprinkled or applyed unto us by the ſpirit, which is given to us as a ſpirit of ſanctification. There is a bleſſed

order of working obſerved as proper to each perſon in the Godhead: the Father electeth, the Son redeemeth, the ſpirit ſanctifieth. The ſpirit is the laſt efficient in the work of our ſalvation: what the Father decreed, and the Son purchaſed, that the Spirit applyeth; and ſo puts the laſt hand to the compleat ſalvation of believers. And this ſome *Divines* give as the reaſon why the ſin againſt the ſpirit is unpardonable, becauſe he being the laſt agent in order of working, if the heart of a man be filled with enmity againſt the ſpirit, there can be no remedy for ſuch a ſin: there is no looking back to the death of Chriſt, or to the Love of God for remedy: this ſin againſt the ſpirit is that *obex infernalis* the deadly ſtop and bar to the whole work of ſalvation: oppoſitely, where the ſpirit is received, obeyed, and dwelleth in the way of ſanctification; into that ſoul the eternal love of God, and ineſtimable benefits of the blood of Chriſt run freely without ſtop or interruption; and conſequently the intereſt of ſuch a ſoul in Jeſus Chriſt is beyond all diſpute.

Fifthly, The giving of the ſpirit to us, or his reſiding in us as a ſanctifying ſpirit, is every where in Scripture made the pledge and earneſt of eternal ſalvation, and conſequently muſt abundantly confirm and prove the ſouls intereſt in Chriſt: Eph. 1. 13, 14. *In whom alſo after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that holy ſpirit of promiſe; which is the earneſt of our inheritance*, &c. So 2 Cor. 1. 22. *who hath alſo ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the ſpirit in our hearts.* And thus you have the point opened and confirmed. The Uſe of all followeth.

Uſe.

Uſe.

Now the only Uſe I ſhall make of this point ſhall be that which lyeth directly both in the eye of the Text, and of the deſign for which it was choſen: namely, by it to try, and examine the truth of our intereſt, and the validity of our claim to Jeſus Chriſt. In purſuance of which deſign I ſhall firſt lay down ſome general rules, and then propoſe ſome particular tryals.

Firſt, I ſhall lay down ſome general rules for the due information of our minds in this point upon which ſo great a weight hangs.

Rule

Rule 1.

Though the Spirit of God be given to us and worketh in us, yet he worketh not as a natural and neceſſary, but as a free and arbitrary agent: he neither aſſiſts nor ſanctifies as the fire burneth, *ad ultimum ſui poſſe*, as much as he can aſſiſt or ſanctifie, but as much as he pleaſeth: *Dividing to every man ſeverally as he will*, 1 Cor. 12. 11. beſtowing greater meaſures of gifts and graces upon ſome, than upon others; and aſſiſting the ſame perſon more at one ſeaſon, than another: and all this variety of operation floweth from his own good pleaſure: his grace is his own, he may give it as he pleaſeth.

Rule 2.

There is a great difference in the manner of the ſpirits working before, and after the work of regeneration: whileſt we are unregenerate, he works upon us as upon dead Creatures that work not at all with him; and what motion there is in our ſouls, is a counter-motion to the ſpirit: but after regeneration it is not ſo, he then works upon a complying and willing mind: we work and he aſſiſts, *Rom.* 8. 26. our conſcience witneſſeth, and he beareth witneſs with it, *Rom.* 8. 16. It is therefore an Errour of dangerous conſequence to think that ſanctified perſons are not bound to ſtir or ſtrive in the way of duty without a ſenſible impulſe or preventing motion of the ſpirit, *Iſa.* 64. 7.

Rule 3.

Though the Spirit of God be given to believers, and worketh in them, yet believers themſelves may do, or omit ſuch things as may obſtruct the working, and obſcure the very being of the ſpirit of God in them; *ita nos tractat, ut à nobis tractatur*: he dealeth with us in his evidencing, and comforting work, as we deal with him in point of tenderneſs, and obedience to his dictates: there is a grieving, yea, there is a quenching of the Spirit by the luſts and corruptions of thoſe hearts in which he dwelleth: and though he will not forſake his habitation as a

ſpirit of ſanctification, yet he may for a time deſert it as a ſpirit of conſolation, *Pſal.* 51. 11.

Rule 4.

Thoſe things which diſcover the indwelling of the Spirit in believers are not ſo much the matter of their duties, or ſubſtance of their actions; as the more ſecret ſprings, holy aims, and ſpiritual manner of their doing, or performing of them; 'tis not ſo much the matter of a prayer, the neat and orderly expreſſions in which it is uttered; as the inward ſenſe, and ſpiritual deſign of the ſoul: 'tis not the choice of elegant words whereby our conceptions are cloathed, or the copiouſneſs of the matter with which we are furniſhed; for even a poor ſtammering tongue, and broken language may have more of the ſpirit of God in it. This made *Luther* ſay, he ſaw more excellency in the duty of a plain ruſtick Chriſtian, than in all the Triumphs of *Caſar*, and *Alexander*: the beauty and excellency of ſpiritual duties is an inward hidden thing.

Rule 5.

All the motions and operations of the ſpirit are alwayes harmonical and ſuitable to the written word: Iſa. 8. 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* The Scriptures are by the inſpiration of the ſpirit, therefore his inſpirations into the hearts of believers muſt either ſubſtantially agree with the Scriptures, or the inſpirations of the ſpirit be ſelf-repugnant, and contradictory to one another. It is very obſervable that the works of grace wrought by the ſpirit in the hearts of believers are repreſented to us in Scripture as a tranſcript or copy of the written word: Jer. 31. 33. *I will write my Law in their hearts.* Now as a true copy anſwers the original, word for word, letter for letter, point for point; ſo do the works of the ſpirit in our ſouls harmonize with the dictates of the ſpirit in the Scriptures: whatſoever motion therefore ſhall be found repugnant thereunto, muſt not be fathered upon the ſpirit of God, but laid at the door of its proper parents, the ſpirit of errour, and corrupt nature.

Rule

Rule 6.

Although the works of the ſpirit in all ſanctified perſons do ſubſtantially agree, both with the written word, and with one another (as ten thouſand copies penned from one original muſt needs agree within themſelves) yet as to the manner of infuſion, and operation, there are found many circumſtantial differences: the ſpirit of God doth not hold one and the ſame method of working upon all hearts: the work of grace is introduced into ſome ſouls with more terrour and trouble for ſin than it is in others: he wrought upon *Paul* one way; upon *Lydia* in another way: he holds ſome much longer under terrours and troubles than he doth others: inveterate and more prophane ſinners find ſtronger troubles for ſin, and are held longer under them, than thoſe are into whoſe hearts grace is more early and inſenſibly infuſed by the ſpirits bleſſing upon religious education: but as theſe have leſs trouble than the others at firſt, ſo commonly they have leſs clearneſs, and more doubts and fears about the work of the ſpirit afterwards.

Rule 7.

There is a great difference found betwixt the ſanctifying, and the comforting influences of the ſpirit upon believers in reſpect of conſtancy, and permanency: his ſanctifying influences abide forever in the ſoul: they never depart; but his comforting influences come and go, and abide not long upon the hearts of believers. Sanctification belongs to the *being* of a Chriſtian, Conſolation only to his *well being*: the firſt therefore is fixed and abiding, the later various and inconſtant. Sanctification brings us to Heaven hereafter, conſolation brings Heaven into us here: our *ſafety* lyes in the former, our *cheerfulneſs* only in the latter. There are times and ſeaſons in the lives of believers wherein the ſpirit of God doth more ſignally and eminently ſeal their ſpirits, and raviſh their hearts with Joy unſpeakable: but what *Bernard* ſpeaketh, is certainly true in the experience of Chriſtians: It is a ſweet hour, and it is but an hour: a thing of ſhort continuance: the reliſh of it is exceeding ſweet, but it is not often that Chriſtians taſte it. And ſo

Rara hora, brevis mora; ſapit quidem ſuaviſſime, ſed guſtatur variſſime. Bern.

ſo much may ſuffice for the general rules about the in-being, and workings of the ſpirit in believers, for the better information of our underſtandings, and prevention of miſtakes in this matter. I ſhall next according to promiſe lay down the particular marks and tryals by which we may diſcern whether God hath given us his ſpirit or no: by which grown Chriſtians when they are in a due compoſed frame, may by the aſſiſtance of the ſpirit of God (for which therefore they are bound to pray) diſcern his indwelling, and working in themſelves.

Evidence 1.

In whomſoever the ſpirit of Chriſt is a ſpirit of ſanctification, to that man or woman he hath been more or leſs a ſpirit of conviction and humiliation: this is the order which the ſpirit conſtantly obſerves in adult, or grown converts. Joh. 16. 8, 9. *and when he is come he will reprove the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of Judgement: of ſin becauſe they believed not on me.* This you ſee is the method he obſerves all the world over: he ſhall reprove or convince the world of ſin. Conviction of ſin hath the ſame reſpect unto ſanctification, as the bloſſoms of trees have to the fruits that follow them: a bloſſom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*; an imperfect fruit in it ſelf, and in order to a more perfect and noble fruit: where there are no bloſſoms, we can expect no fruit, and where we ſee no convictions of ſin, we can expect no converſion to Chriſt. Hath then the ſpirit of God been a ſpirit of conviction to thee? hath he more particularly convinced thee of ſin *becauſe thou haſt not believed on him?* (i. e.) hath he ſhewn thee thy ſin and miſery, as an Unbeliever? not only terrified and affrighted thy conſcience with this or that more notorious act of ſin, but fully convinced thee of the ſtate of ſin that thou art in by reaſon of thy unbelief; which holding thee from Chriſt, muſt needs alſo hold thee under the guilt of all thy other ſins. This gives at leaſt a ſtrong probability that God hath given thee his ſpirit, eſpecially, when this conviction remains day and night upon thy ſoul, ſo that nothing but Chriſt can give it reſt, and conſequently the great inquiſition of thy ſoul is after Chriſt, and none but Chriſt.

Evidence

Evidence 2.

As the ſpirit of God hath been a convincing, ſo he is a quickening ſpirit to all thoſe to whom he is given: Rom. 8. 2. *The law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the Law of ſin and death*: he is the ſpirit of life (*i. e.*) the principle of ſpiritual life in the ſouls whom he inhabiteth: for uniting them to Chriſt, he unites them to the fountain of life: and this ſpiritual life in believers manifeſts it ſelf as the natural life doth in vital actions and operations. When the ſpirit of God comes into the ſoul of a man that was dead, and ſenſeleſs under ſin, O (ſaith he) now I begin to feel the weight and load of ſin, *Rom.* 7. 24. now I begin to hunger, and thirſt after Chriſt and his Ordinances, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. now I begin to breath after God in ſpiritual prayer, *Acts* 9. 11. Spiritual life hath its ſpiritual ſenſes, and ſuitable operations. O think upon this you that cannot feel any burthen in ſin, you that have no hungerings or thirſtings after Chriſt; how can the ſpirit of God be in you? I do not deny but there may at ſome times be much deadneſs and ſenſeleſneſs upon the hearts of Chriſtians, but this is their diſeaſe, not their nature: it is but at ſome times not alwayes, and when it is ſo with them they are burthened with it, and complain of it as their greateſt affliction in this world: their ſpirits are not eaſie and at reſt in ſuch a condition as yours are, their ſpirit is as a bone out of joint, an Arm diſlocated which cannot move any way without pain.

Evidence 3.

Thoſe to whom God giveth his ſpirit have a tender ſympathy with all the intereſt and concernments of Chriſt: this muſt needs be ſo, if the ſame ſpirit which is in Chriſt dwelleth alſo in thy heart: if thou be a partaker of his ſpirit, then what he loves, thou loveſt; and what he hateth, thou hateſt: this is a very plain caſe: even in nature it ſelf we find that the many members of the ſame natural body being animated by one and the ſame ſpirit of life: *whether one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it; or one member be honoured, all*

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the members rejoice with it: now ye are the body of Chriſt, and members in particular, 1 Cor. 12. 26, 27. For look as Chriſt the head of that body is touched with a tender ſenſe and feeling of the miſeries and troubles of his people: he is perſecuted when they are perſecuted, *Acts* 9. 4. ſo they that have the ſpirit of Chriſt in them, cannot be without a deep and tender ſenſe of the reproach and diſhonours that are done to Chriſt: this is *as it were a ſword in their bones*, Pſal. 42. 3. If his publick worſhip ceaſe, the aſſemblies of his people ſcattered; it cannot but go to the hearts of all in whom the ſpirit of Chriſt is: *they will be ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſemblies: the reproach of them will be a burthen*, Zeph. 3. 18. Thoſe that have the ſpirit of Chriſt do not more earneſtly long after any one thing in this world, than the advancement of Chriſts intereſt by converſion and reformation in the Kingdoms of the earth, *Pſal.* 45. 3, 4. *Paul* could rejoice that Chriſt was Preached, though his own afflictions were increaſed, *Phil.* 1. 16. 18. and *John* could rejoice that Chriſt encreaſed, though he himſelf decreaſed; yet therein was his joy fulfilled, *Joh.* 3. 29. ſo certainly the concernments of Chriſt muſt, and will touch that heart which is the habitation of his ſpirit. I cannot deny but even a good *Baruch* may be under a temptation to ſeek great things for himſelf, and be too much ſwallowed up in his own concernments, when God is plucking up, and breaking down, *Jer.* 45. 4, 5. but this is only the influence of a temptation: the true temper and ſpirit of a believer inclines him to ſorrow and mourning when things are in this ſad poſture. Ezech. 9. 4. *Go through the midſt of the City, through the midſt of* Jeruſalem; *and ſet a mark upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midſt thereof.*

O Reader, lay thine hand upon thine heart: is it thus with thee? doſt thou ſympathize with the affairs and concernments of Chriſt in the world? or careſt thou not which way things go with the people of God, and Goſpel of Chriſt; ſo long as thine own affairs proſper, and all things are well with thee?

Evidence

Evidence 4.

Where ever the ſpirit of God dwelleth, he doth in ſome degree mortifie and ſubdue the evils and corruptions of the ſoul in which he reſides: this ſpirit luſteth againſt the fleſh, *Gal.* 5. 17. and believers *through the ſpirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body, Rom.* 8. 13. this is one ſpecial part of his ſanctifying work. I do not ſay he ſo kills and ſubdues ſin in believers, as that it ſhall never trouble or defile them any more: no, no, that freedom belongs to the perfect ſtate in heaven, but its dominion is taken away, though its life be prolonged for a ſeaſon: it lives in believers ſtill, but not upon the proviſion they willingly make to fulfil the Luſt of it, *Rom.* 13. *ult.* The deſign of every true believer is co incident with the deſign of the ſpirit to deſtroy, and mortifie corruption: they long for the extirpation of it: and are daily in the uſe of all ſanctified means, and inſtruments, to ſubdue and deſtroy it: the workings of their corruptions are the afflictions of their ſouls: Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* and there is no one thing that ſweetens the thoughts of death to believers (except the ſight, and full enjoyment of God) more than their expected deliverance from ſin doth.

Evidence 5.

Where ever the ſpirit of God dwelleth in the way of ſanctification, in all ſuch he is the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication: Rom. 8. 26. *Likewiſe the ſpirit alſo helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; but the ſpirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*: where ever he is poured out as the ſpirit of *grace*, he is alſo poured out as the ſpirit of *ſupplication*: *Zech.* 12. 10. his praying, and his ſanctifying influences are undivided. There is a threefold aſſiſtance that the ſpirit gives unto ſanctified perſons in prayer: he helps them before they pray, by ſetting an edge upon their deſires, and affections: he helps them in prayer by ſupplying matters of requeſt to them, teaching them what they ſhould ask of God: he aſſiſteth

them in the manner of prayer, ſupplying to them ſuitable affections, and helping them to be ſincere in all their deſires to God: 'tis he that humbles the pride of their hearts, diſſolves and breaks the hardneſs of their hearts: out of deadneſs makes them lively: out of weakneſs makes them ſtrong: he aſſiſteth the ſpirits of believers after prayer: helping them to faith and patience: to believe and wait for the returns, and anſwers of their prayers. O Reader, reflect upon thy duties, conſider what ſpirituality, ſincerity, humility, broken-heartedneſs, and melting affections after God are to be found in thy duties: is it ſo with thee? or doſt thou ſhuffle over thy duties as an interruption to thy buſineſs and pleaſures? are they an ungrateful task impoſed upon thee by God, and thy own conſcience? are there no hungerings and thirſtings after God in thy ſoul? or if there be any pleaſure ariſing to thee out of prayer, is it not from the oſtentation of thy gifts? if it be ſo, reflect ſadly upon the carnal ſtate of thy heart, theſe things do not ſpeak the ſpirit of grace, and ſupplication to be given thee.

Evidence 6.

Where ever the ſpirit of Grace inhabits, there is an heavenly, ſpiritual frame of mind, accompanying and evidencing the in-dwelling of the ſpirit: Rom. 8. 5, 6. *For they that are after the fleſh do mind the things of the fleſh; but they that are after the ſpirit, the things of the ſpirit: for to be carnally minded is death; but to be ſpiritually minded, is life and peace*: by the mind, underſtand the muſings, reaſonings, yea and the cares, fears, delights, and pleaſures of the ſoul, which follow the workings and meditations of the mind; as theſe are, ſo are we; if theſe be ordinarily, and habitually taken up, and exerciſed about earthly things, then is the frame and ſtate of the man carnal, and earthly: the workings of every creature follow the being, and nature of it: if God, Chriſt, Heaven, and the world to come engage the thoughts, and affections of the ſoul, the temper of ſuch a ſoul is ſpiritual; and the ſpirit of God dwelleth there: this is the life of the regenerate: Phil. 3. 20. *our converſation is in Heaven*:

Heaven: and ſuch a frame of heart is *life*, and *peace*: a ſerene, placid, and moſt comfortable life: no pleaſure upon earth; no gratifications of the ſenſes do reliſh, and ſavour, as ſpiritual things do. Conſider therefore which way thy heart ordinarily works, eſpecially in thy Solitudes, and hours of retirement: theſe things will be a great evidence for, or againſt thy ſoul. *David* could ſay, *how precious are thy thoughts unto me O God! how great is the ſumm of them! if I ſhould count them they are more in number than the ſand; when I awake I am ſtill with thee*, Pſal. 139. 17, 18. Yet it muſt be acknowledged for the relief of weaker Chriſtians that there is great odds, and variety found in this matter among the people of God: for the ſtrength, ſteadineſs, and conſtancy, of a ſpiritual mind reſults from the depth and improvement of ſanctification: the more grace, ſtill the more evenneſs, ſpirituality, and conſtancy there is in the motions of the heart after God. The minds of weak Chriſtians are more eaſily entangled in earthly vanities, and more frequently diverted by inward corruptions: yet ſtill there is a ſpiritual *pondus*, inclination and bent, of their hearts towards God: and the vanity and corruption which hinders their communion with him, is their greateſt grief and burthen under which they groan in this world.

Evidence 7.

Thoſe to whom the ſpirit of grace is given they are led by the ſpirit, Rom. 8. 14. *As many as are led by the ſpirit of God, they are the Sons of God*: ſanctified ſouls give themſelves up to the government, and conduct of the ſpirit: they obey his voice, beg his direction, follow his motions, deny the ſolicitations of the fleſh and blood, in obedience to him: *Gal.* 1. 16. and they that do ſo, they are the ſons of God: 'tis the office of the ſpirit *to guide us into all truth*: and 'tis our great duty to follow his guidance. Hence it is that in all enterprizes, and undertakements the people of God ſo earneſtly beg direction and counſel from him: *Lead me O Lord in thy righteouſneſs*, (ſaith *David*) *make thy way ſtraight before my face*, Pſal. 8. 5. they dare not in doubtful caſes lean to

their own underſtandings: yea, in points of duty, and in points of ſin; they dare not neglect the one, or commit the other, againſt the convictions, and perſwaſions of their own conſciences: though troubles and ſufferings be unavoidable in that path of duty; when they have ballanced duties with ſufferings in their moſt ſerious thoughts, the concluſion and reſult will ſtill be, it is better to obey God than man, the dictates of the ſpirit rather than the counſels of fleſh and blood.

But before I leave this point, I reckon my ſelf a debtor unto weak Chriſtians, and ſhall endeavour to give ſatisfaction to ſome ſpecial doubts and fears with which their minds are ordinarily entangled in this matter: for it is a very plain caſe, that many ſouls have the preſence and ſanctification of the ſpirit without the evidence and comfort thereof. Divers things are found in believers which are as ſo many fountains of fears, and doubts to them. And

Obj. 1. Firſt, I greatly doubt the ſpirit of God is not in me (ſaith a poor Chriſtian) becauſe of the great darkneſs, and ignorance which clouds my ſoul: for I read 1 *Joh.* 2. 27. that he enlightneth the ſoul which he inhabiteth: *the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things*, &c. but alas, my underſtanding is weak and cloudy, I have need to learn of the meaneſt of Gods people: this only I know, that I know nothing as I ought to know.

Sol. Two things are to be reſpected in ſpiritual knowledge; *viz.* the *quantity* and the *efficacy* thereof: your condition doth not ſo much depend upon the meaſures of knowledge, for haply, you are under many natural diſadvantages, and want thoſe helps and means of increaſing knowledge, which others plentifully enjoy: it may be you have wanted the helps of education, or have been incumbred by the neceſſities and cares of the world; which have allowed you but little leaſure for the improvement of your minds: but if that which you do know be turned into practice and obedience, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. if it have influence upon your hearts, and transform your affections into a ſpiritual frame and temper, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17, 18. if your ignorance humble you,

and

and drive you to God daily for the increaſe of knowledge: one drop of ſuch knowledge of Chriſt and your ſelves as this, is more worth than a Sea of humane, moral, unſanctified, and ſpeculative knowledge: though you know but little, yet that little being ſanctified is of great value: though you know but little, time was when ye knew nothing of Jeſus Chriſt, or the ſtate of your own ſouls. In a word, though you know but little, that little you do know will be ſtill encreaſing, *like the morning light, which ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18. If thou knoweſt ſo much as brings thee to Chriſt, thou ſhalt ſhortly be where thy knowledge ſhall be as the light at noon day.

I ſometime find my heart raiſed, and my affections melted in duties, but I doubt it is but in a natural way, and not from the ſpirit of God: could I be aſſured thoſe motions of my heart were from the ſpirit of grace, and not meerly a natural thing, it would be ſingular comfort and ſatisfaction to me. *Obj.* 2.

Firſt, Conſider, whether this be not the ground of your fear and doubting, becauſe you are fain to take pains in the way of meditation, prayer, and other duties to bring your hearts to ſenſe and ſavour the things of God: whereas, it may be you expect your ſpiritual enlargements and comforts ſhould flow in upon you ſpontaneouſly, and drop from heaven immediately of their own accord; without any pains or induſtry of yours: here may be, (and probably is) a great miſtake in this matter; for the ſpirit of God works in the natural method, wherein affections uſe to be raiſed; and makes uſe of ſuch duties as meditation and prayer as inſtruments to do that work by, *Ezech.* 36. 37. So *David* was forced to reaſon with, and chide his own heart: *Pſal.* 42. 5. thy comfort and enlargement may nevertheleſs be the fruit of the ſpirit, becauſe God makes it ſpring up, and grow upon thy duties. *Sol.*

Secondly, Take this as a ſure rule, whatſoever riſes from ſelf alwayes aimes at and terminates in ſelf: this ſtream cannot be carryed higher than the fountain, if therefore thy aim and end in ſtriving for affections and enlargements in duty, be only to win applauſe from men, and appear to be what in reality thou art not, this indeed is the fruit of nature, and

and a very corrupt and hypocritical nature too; but if thy heart be not melted, or desire to be melted in the sense of the evil of sin in order to the farther mortification of it; and under the apprehensions of the free grace and mercy of God in the pardon of sin, in order to the engaging of thy soul more firmly to him: if these or such like be thy ends and designs, or be promoted and furthered by thine enlargements and spiritual comforts, never reject them as the meer fruits of nature; a carnal root cannot bring forth such fruits as these.

Obj. 3. Upon the Contrary, Spiritual deadness, and indispositedness to duties, and to those especially which are more secret, spiritual, and self-denying than others, is the ground upon which many thousand souls who are yet truly gracious, do doubt the indwelling of the spirit in them. O saith such a soul, if the spirit of God be in me, Why is it thus? Could my heart be so dead, so backward, and averse to spiritual duties? no, no, these things would be my meat, and my drink; the delights and pleasures of my life.

Sol. First, These things indeed are very sad, and argue thy heart to be out of frame; as the body is when it cannot relish the most desireable meats, or drinks: but the question will be *how* thy soul behaves it self in such a condition as this is, whether this be easie or burthensome to be born by thee: and if thou complain under it as a burthen; then what pains thou takest to ease thy self, and get rid of it.

Qui bonum vult, & malum non vult, is studium retinet placendi deo: quamvis illectus concupiscentiâ malâ, nonnunquam ex infirmitate illud committat quod deo displicet. Davenant.

Secondly, Know also that there is a great difference betwixt spiritual *death*, and spiritual *deadness*: the former is the *state* of the unregenerate; the latter is the *disease* and complaint of many thousand regenerate souls: if *David* had not felt it as well as thee, he would never have cryed out nine times in the compass of one *Psalm*, *Quicken me*, *quicken me*. Besides,

Thirdly, Though it be *often*, it is not *alwayes* so with thee: there are seasons wherein the Lord breaks in upon thy

thy heart, enlarges thy affections; and ſets thy ſoul at liberty: to which times thou wilt do well to have an eye, in theſe dark and cloudy dayes.

But the Spirit of God is a *comforter* as well as a *ſanctifier*: he doth not only enable men to believe, but after they believe he alſo ſeals them, *Eph.* 1. 13. but I walk in darkneſs, and am a ſtranger to the ſealing, and comforting work of the ſpirit: how therefore can I imagine the ſpirit of God ſhould dwell in me, who go from day to day in the bitterneſs of my ſoul, mourning as without the Sun? *Obj.* 4.

There is a twofold ſealing, and a twofold comfort: the ſpirit ſealeth both *objectively* in the work of ſanctification, and *formally* in giving clear evidence of that work: thou mayeſt be ſealed in the firſt, whileſt thou art not yet ſealed in the ſecond ſenſe: if ſo, thy condition is ſafe, although it be at preſent uncomfortable. And as to comfort, that alſo is of two ſorts, viz. *ſeminal*, or *actual*: in the root, or in the fruit: *light is ſown for the righteous*, Pſal. 97. 11. though the harveſt to reap and gather in that Joy and Comfort be not yet come; and there are many other wayes beſide that of joy and comfort, whereby the indwelling of the ſpirit may evidence it ſelf in thy ſoul: if he do not enable thee to rejoyce, yet if he enable thee ſincerely to mourn for ſin; if he do not enlarge thy heart in Comfort, yet if he humble and purge thy heart by ſorrows; if he deny thee the *aſſurance of faith*, and yet give thee *the dependance of faith*, thou haſt no reaſon to call in queſtion, or deny the indwelling of the ſpirit in thee for that cauſe. *Sol.*

But the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *they that walk in the ſpirit do not fulfil the Luſts of the fleſh*, Gal. 5. 16. but I find my ſelf entangled, and frequently overcome by them, therefore I doubt the ſpirit of God is not in me. *Obj.* 5.

'Tis poſſible the ground of your doubting may be your miſtake of the true ſenſe and meaning of that Scripture: it is not the Apoſtles meaning in that place that ſin in believers doth not work, tempt, and oftentimes overcome, and captivate them: for then he would contradict himſelf in *Rom.* 7. 23. where he thus complains, *but I ſee another Law in my members warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin which is in my members*: *Sol.*

bers: but two things are meant by that expreſſion, *you ſhall not fulfil the Luſts of the fleſh.*

Firſt, That the principle of grace will give cheque to ſin in its firſt motions, and cauſe it to miſcarry in the womb like an untimely birth, before it comes to its full maturity: it ſhall never be able to gain the full conſent of the will as it doth in the unregenerate.

Secondly, if notwithſtanding all the oppoſition grace makes to hinder the birth, or commiſſion of it, it do yet prevail, and break forth into act; yet ſuch acts of ſin as they are not committed without *regret*, ſo they are followed with *ſhame*, *ſorrow*, and true *repentance*: and thoſe very ſurprizals, and captivities of ſin at one time, are made cautions, and warnings to prevent it at another time: if it be ſo with thee, thou doſt not fulfill the Luſts of the fleſh.

And now Reader, upon the whole; if upon examination of thy heart by theſe rules, the Lord ſhall help thee to diſcern the ſaving work of his ſpirit upon thy ſoul, and thereby thine intereſt in Chriſt, what a happy man or woman art thou! what pleaſure will ariſe to thy ſoul from ſuch a diſcovery! Look upon the frame of thine heart *abſolutely* as it is in it ſelf at preſent, or *comparatively* with what once it was and others ſtill are, and thou wilt find enough to tranſport and melt thy heart within thee: certainly this is the moſt glorious piece of Workmanſhip that ever God wrought in the world upon any man: *Eph.* 2. 10. the ſpirit of God is come down from heaven, and hath hallowed thy ſoul to be a Temple for himſelf to dwell in: as he hath ſaid, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, 2 Cor. 7. 16. Moreover this gift of the ſpirit is a ſure pledge, and earneſt of thy future glory: time was when there was no ſuch work upon thy ſoul, and conſidering the frame and temper of it, the total averſation, ſtrong oppoſition, and rooted enmity that was in it; it is the wonder of wonders that ever ſuch a work as this ſhould be wrought upon ſuch an heart as thine: that ever the ſpirit of God whoſe nature is pure and perfect holineſs, ſhould chooſe ſuch an unclean, polluted, abominable heart to frame an habitation for himſelf there

there to dwell in: to say of thy soul (now his spiritual *Temple*) as he once said of the material *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, Psal. 132. 13, 14. *The Lord hath chosen it, he hath desired it for his habitation; this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.* O what hath God done for thy soul!

Think Reader, and think again; are there not many thousands in the world of more ingenuous, sweet, and amiable disposition than thy self, whom yet the spirit of God passeth by, and leaveth them as Tabernacles for *Satan* to dwell in? such a one thou lately wast, and hadst still remained, if God had not wrought for thee, beyond all the expectation, and desires of thine own heart. O bless God that you have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that ye might know the things which are freely given unto you of God.

The Twenty fifth SERMON.

Sermon 25.

Text. 2 COR. 5. 17.

Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a New Creature: old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become new.

Of the nature and neceſſity of the New Creature.

YOU have ſeen one tryal of an intereſt in Chriſt in our laſt diſcourſe, namely by the donation of the Spirit: we have here another Tryal of the ſame matter, from one of the greateſt, and moſt noble effects of the Spirit upon our ſouls; namely, his work of renovation, or *new creation: if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature.* The *Apoſtles* ſcope in the immediate context is to diſſwade Chriſtians from a carnal, ſinful partiality, in their reſpects to men: not to diſpenſe them after the manner of the world, according to the external differences, but the real internal worth and excellency that is in men. This the Apoſtle preſſes by two arguments; one drawn from the end of Chriſts death, *verſe* 15. which was to take us off from thoſe ſelfiſh deſigns, and carnal ends by which the world is ſwayed. Secondly, from the *new ſpirit* by which believers are acted: they that are in Chriſt, are to judge and

and meaſure all things by a new rule: *if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature: old things are paſſed away:* q. d. we have done with that low ſelfiſh ſpirit of the world which was wholly governed by Carnal intereſt; we are now to judge by a new rule, to be acted from a new principle, aim at a new, and more noble end: *behold all things are become new.* In theſe words we have three general parts to be diſtinctly conſidered.

viz.
1. The great queſtion to be determined, *if any man be in Chriſt.*
2. The Rule by which it may be determined, viz. *he is a new Creature.*
3. This general rule more particularly explained, *old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new.*

Firſt, We have here the great queſtion to be determined, Whether a man be in Chriſt? a queſtion upon the determination whereof we muſt ſtand or fall for ever: by [*being in Chriſt*] the *Apoſtle* doth not here mean the general profeſſion of Chriſtianity which gives a man the *reputation* of an intereſt in him: but by being in Chriſt he means an intereſt in him by *vital union* with his perſon, and real participation of his benefits: now this is the queſtion to be determined, the matter to be tryed, than which nothing can be more ſolemn, and important in the whole world. 1.

Secondly, The rule by which this great queſtion may be determined, viz. *The new Creation: if any man be in Chriſt he is a new Creature:* by this rule all the titles and claims made to Chriſt in the profeſſing world are to be examined [*if any man*] be he what he will, high, or low; great, or ſmall; learned, or illiterate; young, or old; if he pretend intereſt in Chriſt: this is the ſtandard by which he muſt be tryed: if he be in Chriſt, he is *a new Creature*; and if he be not *a new Creature*, he is not in *Chriſt*: let his endowments, gifts, confidence, and reputation be what it will be: [*a new Creature*] not new *Phyſically*, he is the ſame perſon he was, but a new Creature, that is, a creature renewed by gracious principles newly infuſed into him from above, which ſway him and guide him in another manner, and to another end than ever he acted before: and theſe gracious principles not being educed 2.

out of any thing which was preexiſtent in man, but infuſed *de novo*, from above, are therefore called in this place, a *new Creature*: this is the rule by which our claim to Chriſt muſt be determined.

3. Thirdly, This general rule is here more particularly explained, *old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new*: he ſatisfies not himſelf to lay down this rule *conciſely*, or expreſs it in general terms by telling us the man in Chriſt muſt be a new Creature, but more particularly, he ſhews us what this new creature is, and what the parts thereof are, *viz.*

Both the { 1. Privative part, *old things are paſſed away.* 2. Poſitive part thereof, *all things are become new.*

Non ſimpliciter, & perfectè, ſed partim re, partim ſpe. Eſtius in loc.

By old things he means all thoſe carnal principles, ſelf ends, fleſhly luſts belonging to the carnal ſtate, or the old man: all theſe are *paſſed away*; not ſimply, and perfectly, but only in part at preſent, and wholly in hope, and expectation hereafter. So much briefly of the privative part of the new Creature: *old things are paſſed away*: a word or two muſt be ſpoken of the *poſitive part, all things are become new.* He means not that the old faculties of the ſoul are aboliſhed, and new ones created in their room: but as our bodies may be ſaid to be new bodies by reaſon of their new endowments, and qualities ſuper-induced and beſtowed upon them in their reſurrection; ſo our ſouls are now renewed by the infuſion of new gracious principles into them in the work of regeneration. Theſe two parts, *viz.* the *privative* part, the paſſing away of old things; and the *poſitive* part, the renewing of all things, do betwixt them comprize the whole nature of ſanctification, which in other Scriptures is expreſſed by equivalent phraſes: ſometimes by putting off the old, and putting on the new man, *Eph.* 4. 24. ſometimes by dying unto ſin, and living unto righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 6. 11. which is the ſelf-ſame thing the Apoſtle here intends by the paſſing away of old things, and making all things new: and becauſe this is the moſt excellent, glorious, and admirable work of the ſpirit which is or can be wrought upon man in this world; therefore the Apoſtle aſſerts it with an *Ecce*, a note of ſpecial remarque and obſervation, *behold all things are become new*, *q. d.* behold

hold and admire this ſurprizing marvellous change which God hath made upon men: they are come out of darkneſs into his marvellous light, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. out of the old, as it were, into a new world, *behold all things are become new.*

Hence Note,

DOCT.

That Gods creating of a new ſupernatural work of grace in the ſoul of any man, is that mans ſure and infallible evidence of a ſaving intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt. Doct.

Suitable hereunto are thoſe words of the Apoſtle, Eph. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jeſus: that ye put off concerning the former converſation the old man which is corrupt according to deceitful luſts: and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs:* where we have in other words of the ſame importance, the very ſelf-ſame deſcription of the man that is in Chriſt, which the Apoſtle gives us in this Text. Now for the opening and ſtating of this point, it will be neceſſary that I ſhew you,

1. Why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation.
2. In what reſpects every ſoul that is in Chriſt is renewed or made a new Creature.
3. What are the remarkable properties, and qualities of this new Creature.
4. The neceſſity of this new Creation to all that are in Chriſt.
5. How this new Creation evidences our intereſt in Chriſt.
6. And then Apply the whole in the proper uſes of it.

Firſt, Why the regenerating work of the ſpirit is called a new Creation: this muſt be our firſt enquiry: and doubtleſs the reaſon of this appellation is the *Analogy*, proportion, and ſimilitude 1.

ſimilitude which is found betwixt the work of regeneration, and Gods work in the firſt Creation: and their agreement, and proportion will be found in the following particulars.

Firſt, The ſame Almighty Author who created the world, createth alſo this work of grace in the ſoul of man, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt:* the ſame powerful word which created the natural, createth alſo the ſpiritual light: it is equally abſurd for any man to ſay, I make my ſelf to repent, or to believe, as it is to ſay, I made my ſelf to exiſt and be.

Minus eſt, te feciſſe hominem, quam ſanctum.

Secondly, The firſt thing that God created in the natural world was light, *Gen.* 1. 3. and the firſt thing which God createth in the new Creation is the light of ſpiritual knowledge, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that Created him.*

Thirdly, Creation is out of nothing: it requires no preexiſtent matter: it doth not bring one thing out of another, but ſomething out of nothing: it gives a being to that which before had no being. So it is alſo in the new Creation; 1 Pet. 2. 9, 10. *who hath called you out of darkneſs, into his marvellous light; which in time paſt were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy:* the work of grace is not educed out of the power, and principles of nature; but is a pure work of creation. The heathen *Philoſophers* could neither underſtand, nor acknowledge the creation of the world, becauſe that notion was repugnant to this maxime of reaſon, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing, nothing can be made: thus did they *inſanire cum ratione*, befool themſelves with their own reaſonings: and after the ſame manner ſome great pretenders to reaſon among us, voting it an abſurdity to affirm, that the work of grace is not virtually, and potentially contained in nature; the new Creation in the old.

Fourthly, It was the vertue, and efficacy of the ſpirit of God which gave the natural world its being by Creation, *Gen.* 1. 2. the ſpirit of God moved upon the face of the waters; it hovered over the *chaos*; as the wings of a bird do over her eggs, as the ſame word is rendred, *Deut.* 32. 11. cheriſhing

cheriſhing as it were by incubation, that rude maſs by a ſecret quickening influence, by which it drew all the Creatures into their ſeveral forms, and particular natures. So it is in the new Creation: a quickning influence muſt come from the ſpirit of God, or elſe the new creature can never be formed in us, Joh. 3. 8. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit*: and ver. 6. *that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit.*

Fifthly, The word of God was the inſtrument of the firſt creation, Pſal. 33. 6, 9. *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth: for he ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt*: the word of God is alſo the inſtrument of the new Creation or work of Grace in man, 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible; by the word of God which liveth, and abideth for ever.* So James 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth: of his own will*, that was the *impulſive cauſe*; with the *word of truth*, that is the *inſtrumental cauſe*: great reſpect and honour, love and delight is due to the word upon this account, that it is the inſtrument of our regeneration, or new Creation.

Sixthly, The ſame power which created the world, ſtill under-props and ſupports it in its being: the world owes its conſervation, as well as its exiſtence to the power of God, without which it could not ſubſiſt one moment. Juſt ſo it is with the new Creation, which entirely depends upon the preſerving power which firſt formed it, Jude ver. 1. *Preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus*; and 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who were kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*: as in a natural way *we live, move, and have our being in God*, Acts 17. 28. ſo in a ſpiritual way, we continue believing, repenting, loving, and delighting in God; without whoſe continued influence upon our ſouls we could do neither.

Seventhly, In a word, God ſurveyed the firſt Creation with complacence and great delight: he beheld the work of his hands and approved them as very good, *Gen.* 1. 31. ſo is it alſo in the ſecond creation; nothing pleaſeth, and delights God more than the works of grace in the ſouls of his people: it is not any outward priviledge of nature, or gift of Providence which commends any man to God: *circumciſion is nothing, and uncircumciſion is nothing, but a new creature*, Gal. 6. 15.

And

And thus you ſee, upon what grounds the work of regeneration in man is ſtiled a new Creature, which was the firſt thing to be opened.

2. Secondly, Next we muſt enquire in what reſpects every ſoul that is in Chriſt is renewed, or made a new Creature: and here we ſhall find a threefold renovation of every man that is in Chriſt, *viz.*

He is renewed { 1. In his ſtate and *Condition.* 2. In his frame and *Conſtitution.* 3. In his practice and *Converſation.*

Firſt, He is renewed in his ſtate and condition, for he paſſeth from *death to life, in his* Juſtification, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. he was condemned by the Law, he is now Juſtified freely by grace through the redemption which is in Chriſt: he was under the curſe of the firſt Covenant; he is under the bleſſing of the new Covenant: he was afar off, but is now made nigh unto God: an alien, a ſtranger once, now of the houſhold of God, *Eph.* 2. 12, 13. O bleſſed change from a ſad, to a ſweet and comfortable condition! *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. 8. 1.

Secondly, Every man in Chriſt is renewed in his frame, and conſtitution: all the faculties and affections of his ſoul are renewed by regeneration: his *underſtanding* was dark, but now is light in the Lord, *Eph.* 5. 8. his *conſcience* was dead and ſecure, or full of guilt and horrour; but is now become tender, watchful, and full of peace, *Heb.* 9. 14. his *will* was rebellious, ſtubborn, and inflexible; but is now made obedient, and complying with the will of God, *Pſal.* 110. 2. his *deſires* did once pant, and ſpend themſelves in the purſuit of vanities, now they are ſet upon God, *Iſa.* 26. 8. his *Love* did fondly dote upon enſnaring earthly objects, now it is ſwallowed up in the infinite excellencies of God, and Chriſt, *Pſal.* 119. 97. his *joy* was once in triſles, and things of nought; now his rejoycing is in Chriſt Jeſus, *Phil.* 3. 3. his *fears* once were verſant about noxious creatures, now God is the object of the fear of *reverence*, *Act.* 9. 31. and ſin the object of the fear of *caution*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. his *hopes* and expectations were only from the world preſent, but now, from that to come, *Heb.* 6. 19. Thus the ſoul in its faculties, and affections is renewed;

newed; which being done, the members and ſenſes of the body muſt needs be deſtinated, and imployed by it in new ſervices: no more to be the weapons of unrighteouſneſs, but inſtruments of ſervice to Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 6. 19. and thus all that are in Chriſt are renewed in their frame and conſtitution.

Thirdly, The man in Chriſt is renewed in his practice and *Converſation*: the manner of operation alwayes follows the nature of beings: now the regenerate not being what they were, cannot walk and act, as once they did: Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. *And you hath he quickned, who were once dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; wherein ye walked according to the courſe of this world*, &c. they were carryed away like water by the ſtrength of the tyde, by the influence of their own corrupt natures, and the cuſtomes and examples of the world: but the caſe is now altered. So in 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. the Apoſtle ſhews believers their old companions in ſin, and tells them *ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified*, &c. *q. d.* the world is now well altered with you, thanks be to the grace of God for it. This wonderful change of practice which is ſo univerſal, and remarkable in all the regenerate, and immediately conſequent to their converſion, ſets the world a wondring at them: 1 Pet. 4. 4. *Wherein they think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you*: they think it ſtrange, the word ſignifies to ſtand at gaze, as the hen doth which hath brooded, and hatched *Partridge Eggs*, when ſhe ſeeth the *Chickens* which ſhe hath brought forth, take the wing and fly away from her: thus do the men of the world ſtand amazed to ſee their old companions in ſin, whoſe language once was vain, and earthly; it may be prophane, and filthy; now to be praying, ſpeaking of God, Heaven, and things ſpiritual; having no more to do with them as to ſin, except by way of reprehenſion and admonition: this amazes the world, and makes them look with a ſtrange admiring eye upon the people of God.

Ἐνῷ ξενί-ζονται· *Obſtupeſcent ut ad rei inuſitatæ ſpectaculum.* Beza. *Ils ſe trouvent tous nouveaux & comme en un autre monde.*

Thirdly, In the next place let us enquire into the properties, and qualities of this new creature, and ſhew you as we are able what they are: yet Reader, expect not here an exact and accurate account of that which is ſo great a myſtery: for if queſtions may be moved about a ſilly fly, which may puzzle 3.

the greateſt *Philoſopher* to reſolve them: how much more may we conceive this great and marvellous work of God, the moſt myſterious, and admirable of all his works, to ſurmount the d underſtandings of the moſt illuminated Chriſtians? O how little do we know of the nature, properties, and operations of this new Creature! ſo far as God hath revealed it to our weak underſtandings, we may ſpeak of it. And

Firſt, The Scripture ſpeaks of it as a thing of great difficulty to be conceived by man: Joh. 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit.* The original of winds is a queſtion of great difficulty in *Philoſophy*: we hear the voice of the wind, feel its mighty force, and behold its ſtrange effects; but neither know whence it comes, or whither it goes: ask a man, Do you hear the wind blow? yes: do you feel it blow? yes, very ſenſibly: do you ſee the effects of it rending and overturning the trees? yes, very plainly: but can you deſcribe its nature, or declare its original? no, that is a myſtery which I do not underſtand: why ſo; Juſt ſo it is with him that is born of the ſpirit: the holy ſpirit of God, whoſe nature and operations we underſtand but little of, comes from heaven, quickens, and influences our ſouls, beats down and mortifies our luſts by his almighty power: theſe effects of the ſpirit in us we experimentally feel, and ſenſibly diſcern; but how the ſpirit of God firſt entred into, and quickned our ſouls, and produced this new creature in them, we underſtand little more of it, than how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with Child, *Eccleſ.* 11. 5. Therefore is the life of the new creature called a hidden life, *Col.* 3. 3. the nature of that life is not only hidden totally from all carnal men, but in a very great meaſure it is an hidden and unknown life unto ſpiritual men, though themſelves be the ſubjects of it.

Secondly, But though this life of the new Creature be a great myſtery, and ſecret in ſome reſpects, yet ſo far as it is known, and appears unto us, the new creature is the moſt [illegible] and lovely creature that ever God made: for the [illegible] of the Lord himſelf is upon it: *the new man is created* [illegible] Eph. 4. 24. as the picture is drawn after the man: it is a draught of God himſelf, delineated by the ſpirit, that admirable

admirable *Artiſt*, upon the ſoul of man: holineſs is the beauty and glory of God: and in holineſs the new creature is created after Gods own image, *Col.* 3. 10. the regenerate ſoul hereby becomes holy, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. not *eſſentially* holy as God is, nor yet *efficiently* holy: for the regenerate ſoul can neither make it ſelf, nor others holy: but the life of the new creature may be ſaid to reſemble the life of God in this, that as God lives to himſelf, ſo the new creature wholly lives to God: as God loves holineſs, and hates the contrary, ſo doth the new creature: 'tis in theſe things formed *after the image of him that created it*: when God creates this creature in the ſoul of man, we are ſaid then to be *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. ſo that there can be nothing communicated unto men, which beautifies and adorns their ſouls as this new creation doth: men do not reſemble God as they are noble, and as they are rich, but as they are holy: no gift, no endowment of nature imbeliſhes the ſoul, as this new creature doth: an awful Majeſty ſits upon the brow of the new creature, commanding the greateſt, and worſt of men to do homage to it, *Mark* 6. 20. yea ſuch is the beauty of the new creature that Chriſt its *Author* is alſo its *admirer*: Cant. 4. 9. *Thou haſt raviſhed mine heart with one of thine eyes.*

Thirdly, This New Creature is created in man upon the higheſt deſign that ever any work of God was wrought: the end of its creation and infuſion is high and noble: Salvation to the ſoul in which it is wrought: this is both the *finis operis*, and the *finis operantis*: it is the deſign both of the work, and of the workman that wrought it: when we receive the end of our faith, we receive the ſalvation of our ſouls. Salvation is the end faith: as death is the end of ſin, ſo life eternal is the end of grace. The new creature doth by the inſtinct and ſteady direction of its own nature, take its courſe as directly to God, and to heaven the place of his full enjoyment, as the Rivers do to the Ocean: it declares it ſelf to be made for God, by its reſtleſs workings after him: and as ſalvation is the end of the new creature, ſo it is the expreſs deſign and end of him that created it: 2 Cor. 5. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God*: by this workmanſhip of his upon our ſouls he is now poliſhing, pre-

paring, and *making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12.

Fourthly, The new Creation is the moſt neceſſary work that ever God wrought upon the ſoul of man: the eternal well-being of his ſoul depends upon it; and without it no man ſhall ſee God: *Heb.* 12. 14. and *Joh.* 1. 3, 5. *Except ye be regenerate, and born again, ye cannot ſee the Kingdom of God:* can you be ſaved without Chriſt? you know you cannot: can you have intereſt in Chriſt without the new creature? my Text expreſly tells you it can never be: *for if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature.* O Reader, what ever ſlight thoughts of this matter, and with what a careleſs and unconcerned eye ſoever thou readeſt theſe lines; yet know thou muſt either be a new creature, or a miſerable and damned creature for ever. If civility without the new creature could ſave thee, why are not the *moral Heathens* ſaved alſo? if ſtrictneſs of life without the new creature could ſave thee, why did it not ſave the *Scribes and Phariſees* alſo? if an high profeſſion of Religion without the new creature can ſave thee, why did it not ſave *Judas*, *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus* alſo? Nothing is more evident than this, that no repentance, obedience, ſelf-denyal, prayers, tears, reformations, or ordinances without the new creation avail any thing to the ſalvation of thy ſoul: the very blood of Chriſt himſelf without the new creature never did, and never will ſave any man. Oh how neceſſary a work is the new creation! circumciſion avails nothing, and uncircumciſion nothing, but a new creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is a marvellous and wonderful creature: there are many wonders in the firſt creation: the works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein, *Pſal.* 111. 2. but there are no wonders in nature, like thoſe in grace: is it not the greateſt wonder that ever was ſeen in the world (except the incarnation of the Son of God) to ſee the nature, and temper of man, ſo altered and changed as it is by grace: to ſee *Laſcivious Corinthians*, and *Idolatrous Epheſians* become mortified and Heavenly Chriſtians: to ſee a fierce and cruel *perſecutor*, become a glorious *confeſſor* and ſufferer for Chriſt, *Gal.* 1. 23. to ſee the carnal mind of man which was lately fully ſet in a ſtrong bent

to

to the world, to be wholly taken off from its luſts, and ſet upon things that are ſpiritual and heavenly: certainly it was not a greater miracle to ſee dead *Lazarus* come out of his *Sepulchre*, than it is to ſee the dead and carnal mind coming out of its Luſts, to embrace Jeſus Chriſt. It was not a greater wonder to ſee the dead dry bones in the vally to move, and come together, than it is to ſee a dead ſoul moving after God, and moving to Chriſt in the way of faith.

Sixthly, The new creature is an *immortal creature*, a creature that ſhall never ſee death, *Joh.* 4. 14. it is in the ſoul of man a well of water, ſpringing up into eternal life. I will not adventure to ſay it is immortal in its own nature, for it is but a creature, as my Text calls it, and we know that eſſential interminability is the incommunicable property of God: the new creature hath both a beginning, and ſucceſſion, and therefore might alſo have an end, as to any thing in it ſelf, or its own nature: experience alſo ſhews us that it is capable both of increaſing and decreaſing; and may be brought nigh unto death: *Rev.* 3. 2. the works of the ſpirit in believers *may be ready to dye:* but though its perpetuity flow not out of its own *nature*, it flows out of Gods *Covenant*, and promiſes; which make it an immortal Creature: when all other excellencies in man go away, as at death they will, *Job* 4. 21. this excellency only remains: our gifts may leave us, our friends leave us, our eſtates leave us, but our graces will never leave us: they aſcend with the ſoul (in which they inhere) into glory, when the ſtroke of death ſeparates it from the body.

Seventhly, The new Creature is an *heavenly creature: 'tis not born of fleſh, nor of blood, or of the will of man, but of God*, Joh. 1. 13. its deſcent and original is heavenly, it is ſpirit born of ſpirit, *Joh.* 3. 6. its center is heaven, and thither are all its tendencies, *Pſal.* 63. 8. its proper food on which it lives are heavenly things, *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7. it cannot feed as other creatures do upon earthly things: the object of all its delights and loves is in heaven, Pſal. 73. 26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* the hopes and expectations of the new creature are all from heaven: it looks for little in this world, but waits for the coming of the Lord: the life of the new creature upon earth is a life of patient waiting for Chriſt: his deſires

deſires and longings are after Heaven, *Phil.* 1.23. The fleſh indeed lingers and would delay, but the new creature haſtens and would fain be gone: 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. it is not at home while it is here; it came from Heaven and cannot be quiet nor ſuffer the ſoul in which it dwells to be ſo until it comes thither again.

Eighthly, The new creature is an *active* and laborious creature: no ſooner it is born, but it is acting in the ſoul, Acts 9. 6. *behold he prayeth*; activity is its very nature, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the ſpirit, let us walk in the ſpirit.* Nor is it to be admired that it ſhould be always active and ſtirring in the ſoul, ſeeing activity in obedience was the very end for which it was created, *for we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*, Eph. 2. 10. and he that is acted in the duties of Religion by this principle of the new creature or nature, will (ſo far as that principle acts him) delight to do the will of God; rejoice in the way of his Commandments; and find the ſweeteſt pleaſure in the paths of duty.

Ninthly, The new creature is a *thriving creature*, growing from ſtrength to ſtrength, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. and changing the ſoul in which it is ſubjected from glory unto glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. The vigorous tendencies and conſtant ſtrivings of this new creature is to attain its juſt perfection and maturity; *Phil.* 3. 11. it can endure no ſtints and limits to its deſires ſhort of perfection: every degree of ſtrength it attains, doth but whet and ſharpen his deſires after higher degrees: upon this account it greatly delights in the Ordinances of God, Duties of Religion and Society of the Saints; as they are helps and improvements to it in order to its great deſign.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur: actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur: actio pervertitur, fides non ſubvertitur: concutitur, non excutitur; defluit fructus, latet ſuccus: effectus juſtificationis ſuſpenditur, at ſtatus juſtificati non diſſolvitur. Suffrag. Brit.

Tenthly, The new creature is *a creature of wonderful preſervations*: there are many wonders of divine providences in the preſervation of our natural lives, but none like thoſe whereby the life of the new creature is preſerved in our ſouls: there are critical times of temptation and deſertion in which it is ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 2. the degrees of its ſtrength and livelineſs are ſometimes ſadly abated, and its ſweet and comfortable workings intermitted, *Rev.* 2. 4. the evidences by

which

which its being in us was wont to be discovered, may be, and often are darkned, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. and the soul in which it is may draw very sad conclusions about the issue and event; concluding its life not only to be hazarded but quite extinguished, *Psal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. but though it be ready to dye, God wonderfully preserves it from death: it hath as well its reviving as its fainting seasons: and thus you see what are the lovely and eximious properties of the new creature: In the next place,

Fourthly, We will demonstrate the *necessity* of this new creation to all that are in Christ, and by him expect to attain salvation: and the necessity of the new creature will appear divers ways. 4.

First, From the positive and express will of God revealed in Scripture touching this matter: search the Scriptures and you shall find God hath laid the whole stress and weight of your eternal happiness by Jesus Christ upon this work of the spirit in your souls. So our Saviour tells *Nicodemus*, John 3. 5. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God:* agreeable whereunto are those words of the Apostle, Heb. 12. 14. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* And whereas some may think that their birth-right priviledges, injoyment of Ordinances and profession of Religion may commend them to Gods acceptance without this new creation; he shews them how fond and ungrounded all such hopes are, Gal. 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature:* Christ and Heaven are the gifts of God, and he is at liberty to bestow them upon what terms and conditions he pleaseth: and this is the way, the only way and stated method in which he will bring men by Christ unto glory: men may raze out the impressions of these things from their own hearts, but they can never alter the setled course and method of Salvation: either we must be new creatures, as the precepts of the word command us, or lost and damned creatures as the threatnings of the word plainly tell us.

Secondly, This new Creation is the inchoative part of that great Salvation which we expect through Christ, and therefore without this all hopes and expectations of Salvation must vanish:

vaniſh: Salvation and renovation are inſeparably connected. Our glory in Heaven, if we rightly underſtand its nature, conſiſteth in two things; namely our aſſimilation to God, and our fruition of God: and both theſe take their beginning and riſe from our renovation in this world: here we begin to be changed into his Image in ſome degree, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. for the new man is created *after God*, as was opened above. In the work of grace God is ſaid *to begin that good work* which is to be *finiſhed* or conſummated in the day of Chriſt, *Phil.* 1.6. Now nothing can be more irrational than to imagine that ever that deſign or work ſhould be finiſhed and perfected which never had a beginning.

Thirdly, So neceſſary is the new creation to all that expect ſalvation by Chriſt, that without this Heaven would be no Heaven, and the glory thereof no glory to us, by reaſon of the unſuitableneſs and averſation of our carnal minds thereunto: *the carnal mind is enmity againſt God*, Rom. 8. 7. and enmity is excluſive of all complacency and delight: there is a neceſſity of a ſuitable and agreeable frame of heart to God in order to that complacential reſt of our ſouls in him: and this agreeable temper is wrought by our new creation, 2 Cor. 5. 5. *He that hath wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing is God:* renovation you ſee is the working or moulding of a mans ſpirit into an agreeable temper: or as it is in *Col.* 1. 12. the making of us *meet* for the inheritance of the Saints in light.

From all which it follows, that ſeeing there can be no complacence or delight in God without ſuitableneſs and conformity to him, as is plain from 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. as well as from the reaſon and nature of the thing it ſelf: either God muſt become like us ſuitable to our ſinful, corrupt and vain hearts, which were but a rude blaſphemy once to imagine; or elſe we muſt be made agreeable and ſuitable to God, which is the very thing I am now proving the neceſſity of.

Fourthly, There is an abſolute neceſſity of the new creature to all that expect intereſt in Chriſt and the glory to come: ſince all the characters, marks and ſigns of ſuch an intereſt are conſtantly taken from the new creature wrought in us. Look over all the marks and ſigns of intereſt in Chriſt or ſalvation by him which are diſperſed through the Scriptures, and

and you ſhall ſtill find purity of heart, *Matth.* 5. 8. holineſs both in principle and practice, *Heb.* 12. 14. mortification of ſin, *Rom.* 8. 13. longing for Chriſts appearance, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. with multitudes more of the ſame nature, to be conſtantly made the marks and ſigns of our ſalvation by Chriſt. So that either we muſt have a *new Bible* or a *new Heart:* for if theſe Scriptures be the true and faithful words of God, no unrenewed creature can ſee his face; which was the fourth thing to be opened.

5. Fifthly, The laſt thing to be opened is how the new creation is an infallible proof and evidence of the ſouls intereſt in Chriſt: and this will appear divers ways.

First, Where all the ſaving graces of the ſpirit are, there intereſt in Chriſt muſt needs be certain; and where the new creature is, there all the ſaving graces of the ſpirit are: for what is the new creature but the frame or *Syſteme* of all ſpecial ſaving graces: it is not this or that particular grace, as faith, or hope, or love to God, which conſtitutes the new creature, for theſe are but as ſo many particular limbs or branches of it: but the new creature is comprehenſive of all the graces of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22, 23. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance,* &c. any one of the ſaving ſpecial graces of the Spirit gives proof of our intereſt in Chriſt: how much more then the new creature which is the complex frame or *Syſteme* of all the graces together?

Secondly, To conclude, where all the cauſes of an intereſt in Chriſt are found, and all the effects and fruits of an intereſt in Chriſt do appear; there undoubtedly a real intereſt in Chriſt is found: but where-ever you find a new creature, you find all the cauſes and all the effects of an intereſt in Chriſt: for there you ſhall find,

First, The *impulſive cauſe, viz.* the electing love of God from which the new creature is inſeparable, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. with the new creature alſo the *meritorious, efficient* and *final* cauſes of intereſt in Chriſt, and union with him are ever found, *Eph.* 2. 10. *Eph.* 1. 4, 5, 6.

Secondly, All the effects and fruits of intereſt in Chriſt are found with the new creature: there are all the fruits of obedience, for we are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good

works, *Eph.* 2. 10. *Rom.* 7. 4. there is true ſpiritual oppoſition to ſin, 1 Joh. 5. 18. *He that is begotten of God keepeth himſelf, and that wicked one toucheth him not:* there is love to the people of God, 1 Joh. 4. 7. *every one that loveth is born of God*: there is a conſcientious reſpect to the duties of both Tables; for the new creature is created after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, *Eph.* 4. 24. there is perſeverance in the ways of God to the very end, and victory over all temptations: for whoſoever is born of God overcometh the world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. It were eaſie to run over all other particular fruits of our union with Chriſt, and ſhew you every one of them in the new creature. And thus much of the Doctrinal part of this point.

The

The Twenty ſixth SERMON.

Sermon 26.

2 COR. 5. 17. Text.

Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a New Creature: old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become new.

AFter the explication of the ſenſe of this Scripture we obſerved,

DOCT.

That Gods creating of a new ſupernatural work of grace in the ſoul of any man, is that mans ſure and infallible evidence of a ſaving intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt. Doct.

You have heard why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new creation; in what reſpect every ſoul in Chriſt is renewed; what the eximious properties of this new creature are: the indiſpenſibleneſs and neceſſity thereof hath been alſo proved: and how it evidences our intereſt in Chriſt was cleared in the doctrinal part, which we now come to improve in the ſeveral Uſes ſerving

for our
1. Information.
2. Conviction.
3. Examination.
4. Exhortation.
5. Conſolation.

1ſt Uſe for Information.

Uſe 1. Is the new Creature the ſure and infallible evidence of our ſaving intereſt in Chriſt? from hence then we are informed,

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *How miſerable and deplorable an eſtate all unrenewed ſouls are in:* who can lay no claim to Chriſt during that ſtate, and therefore are under an impoſſibility of ſalvation. O Reader, if this be the ſtate of thy ſoul, better had it been for thee not to have been Gods natural workmanſhip as a *man*, except thou be his ſpiritual workmanſhip alſo as a *new man*. I know the *Schoolmen* determine otherwiſe, and ſay that damnation is rather to be choſen than an annihilation: a miſerable being is better than no being: and it is very true with reſpect to the glory of God, whoſe juſtice ſhall triumph for ever in the damnation of the unregenerate; but with reſpect to us, 'tis much better never to have been his creatures in the way of *generation*, than not to be his new creatures in the way of *regeneration*. So Chriſt ſpeaks of *Judas*, that Son of perdition, Mark 14. 21. *Good had it been for that man if he had never been born*: for what is a being without the comfort of it? What is life without the joy and pleaſure of life? A damned being is a being without comfort, no glimps of light ſhines into that darkneſs: they ſhall indeed ſee and underſtand the felicity, light and joy of the Saints in glory: but not partake in the leaſt meaſure of the comfort, Luk. 13. 28. *They ſhall ſee Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, but they themſelves ſhut out*: ſuch a ſight is ſo far from giving any comfort, that it will be the aggravation and increaſe of torment. O 'tis better to have no being at all, than to have a being only to capacitate a man for miſery: to

deſire

deſire death while death flies from him, *Rev.* 4. 6. The opinion of the *Schoolmen* will never paſs for ſound doctrine among the damned: think on it, Reader, and lay it to thine heart, better thou hadſt dyed from the womb, better the knees had prevented thee, and the breaſts which thou haſt ſucked, than that thou ſhouldſt live and dye a ſtranger to the new birth, or that thy Mother ſhould bring thee forth only to encreaſe and fill up the number of the damned.

Inference 2.

And on the contrary we may hence learn, what cauſe regenerate ſouls have to bleſs God for the day wherein they were born. Inference 2. O what a priviledged ſtate doth the new birth bring men into! 'Tis poſſible for the preſent they underſtand it not, for many Believers are like a great *Heir* lying in the *Cradle* that knows not to what an eſtate and honour he is born: Nevertheleſs on the ſame day wherein we become new creatures by regeneration, we have a firm title, and ſolid claim to all the priviledges of the Sons of God, *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. God becomes our Father by a treble title, not only the Father of our *beings* by nature, which was all the relation we had to him before, but our Father by *Adoption* and by *Regeneration*: which is a much ſweeter and more comfortable relation. In that day the Image of God is reſtored, *Eph.* 4. 24. this is both the health and beauty of the ſoul. In that day we are begotten again to a lively hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. a hope more worth than ten thouſand worlds, in the *troubles of life*, and in the *ſtraits of death*: this is a creature which lives for ever, and will make thy life happy for ever. Some have kept their birthday as a *feſtival*, a day of rejoycing, but none have more cauſe to rejoice that ever they were born, than thoſe that are new born.

Inference 3.

Learn from hence that the work of grace is wholly ſupernatural: Inference 3. *'tis a creation, and creation work is above the power of the creature*: no power but that which gave being to the world, can give a being to the new creature: almighty power goes forth to give being to the new creature: this creature is not born of

fleſh

fleſh or of blood, nor of the will of man but of God, *Joh.* 1. 13. the nature of this new creature ſpeaks its original to be above the power of nature: the very notion of a new creation ſpoils the proud boaſts of the great aſſerters of the power and ability of the will of man. When God therefore puts the queſtion, who maketh thee to differ? and what haſt thou that thou haſt not received? Let thy ſoul, Reader, anſwer it with all humility and thankfulneſs; 'tis thou, Lord, thou only, that madeſt me to differ from another, and what I have received, I have received from thy free grace.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *If the work of grace be a new creation, let not the parents and friends of the unregenerate utterly deſpair of the converſion of their relations, how great ſoever their preſent diſcouragements are:* if it had been poſſible for a man to have ſeen the rude and indigeſted *Chaos* before the Spirit of God moved upon it, would he not have ſaid, can ſuch a beautiful order of beings, ſuch a pleaſant variety of creatures ſpring out of this dark lump? Surely it would have been very hard for a man to have imagined it. It may be you ſee no diſpoſitions or hopeful inclinations in your friends towards God and ſpiritual things; nay, poſſibly they are totally oppoſite and filled with enmity againſt them; they deride and jeer all ſerious piety wherever they behold it; this indeed is very ſad: but yet remember the work of grace is creation work: though there be no diſpoſition at all in their wills, no tenderneſs in their Conſciences, no light or knowledge in their minds; yet God that commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, can ſhine into their hearts; to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt: he can ſay to the dry bones, live; to the proud and ſtubborn heart, come down, and yield thy ſelf to the will of God: and if he command, the work is done. God can make thee yet to rejoyce over thy moſt uncomfortable relations, to ſay with the Father of the Prodigal, Luke 15. 24. *This my Son was dead, and is alive again; he was loſt and is found: and they began to be merry:* difficulties are for men but not for God: he works in converſion by a power which is able to ſubdue all things unto it ſelf.

Inference

Inference 5.

If none but new creatures be in Chriſt, how ſmall a remnant among men belong to Chriſt in this world! Among the multitude of rational creatures inhabiting this world, how few, how very few are new creatures? 'Tis the obſervation of the learned Mr. *Brierwood*, that if the world be divided into thirty parts, nineteen parts are heatheniſh Idolaters; ſix parts *Mahumetans*, and only five out of thirty, which may be in a large ſenſe called *Chriſtians*: of which the far greater part is overſpread with popiſh darkneſs: ſeparate from the remainder, the multitudes of prophane, meerly civil and hypocritical profeſſors of Religion; and how few will remain for Jeſus Chriſt in this world? Look over the *Cities*, *Towns* and *Pariſhes* in this populous *Kingdom*; and how few ſhall you find that ſpeak the language or do the works of new creatures? How few have ever had any awakening convictions on them? And how many of thoſe that have been convinced have miſcarried and never come to the new birth? The more cauſe have they whom God hath indeed regenerated to admire the riches of Gods diſtinguiſhing mercy to them. *Inference* 5.

Inference 6.

If the change by grace be a new creation, how univerſal and marvellous a change doth regeneration make upon men! The new Creation ſpeaks a marvellous and univerſal alteration both upon the ſtate and tempers of men: they come out of darkneſs, groſs, helliſh darkneſs into light, a marvellous and heavenly light, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Eph.* 5. 8. their condition, diſpoſition and converſation (as you have heard) is all new: and yet this marvellous change as great and univerſal as it is, is not alike evident and clearly diſcernable in all new creatures: and the reaſons are, *Inference* 6.

Firſt, Becauſe the work of grace is wrought in diverſe methods, and manners in the people of God. Some are changed from a ſtate of notorious prophaneneſs unto ſerious godlineſs: there the change is conſpicuous and very evident; all the neighbourhood rings of it: But in others it is more inſenſibly,

ſenſibly diſtilled in their tender years by the bleſſing of God upon religious education, and there it is more indiſcernable.

Secondly, Though a great change be wrought, yet much natural corruption ſtill remains for their humiliation and daily exerciſe; and this is a ground of fear and doubtings: they ſee not how ſuch corruptions are conſiſtent with the new Creature.

Thirdly, In ſome the new Creature ſhews it ſelf moſtly in the affectionate part, in deſires and breathings after God; and but little in the clearneſs of their underſtandings, and ſtrength of their judgements: for want of which they are entangled and kept in darkneſs moſt of their dayes.

Fourthly, Some Chriſtians are more tryed and exerciſed by temptations from *Satan* than others are, and theſe clouds darken the work of grace in them.

Fifthly, There is great difference and variety found in the natural tempers and conſtitutions of the regenerate. Some are of a more *melancholy*, fearful and ſuſpicious temper than others are, and are therefore much longer held under doubtings and trouble of ſpirit. Nevertheleſs what differences ſoever theſe things make, the change made by grace is a marvellous change.

Inference 7.

Inference 7. Laſtly, *How incongruous are carnal wayes and courſes to the ſpirit of Chriſtians? who being new creatures can never delight or find pleaſure in their former ſinful companions and practices?* Alas, thoſe things are now moſt unſuitable, loathſom and deteſtable, how pleaſant ſoever they once were: that which they counted their *liberty*, would now be reckoned their greateſt *bondage*: that which was their *glory* is now their *ſhame*, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed, for the end of thoſe things is death:* they need not be preſſed by others, but will freely confeſs of themſelves what fools and mad men they once were: none can cenſure their former converſation more ſeverely than themſelves do, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13, 14.

2*d Uſe*

2d. Uſe for Conviction.

If none be in Chriſt but new creatures, and the new creation make ſuch a change as hath been deſcribed, This may convince us how many of us deceive our ſelves, and run into dangerous and fatall miſtakes in the greateſt concernment we have in this world. But before I fall into this uſe I deſire none may make a perverſe and ill uſe of it: Let not the wicked conclude from hence that there is no ſuch thing as true religion in the world, or that all who do profeſs it are but a pack of hypocrites: neither let the godly injure themſelves by that which is deſigned for their benefit, let none conclude that ſeeing there are ſo many miſtakes committed about this new creature, that therefore aſſurance muſt needs be impoſſible as the *Papiſts* affirm it to be. The proper uſe that ſhould be made of this doctrine is, to undeceive falſe pretenders, and to awaken all to a more deep and thorough ſearch of their own conditions; which being precautioned, let all men be convinced of the following truths. *Uſe* 2.

Firſt, That the change made by civility upon ſuch as were lewd and prophane, is in its whole kind and nature a different thing from the new creature; the power and efficacy of moral vertue is one thing, the influence of the regenerating Spirit is quite another thing: however ſome have ſtudied to confound them. The heathens excelled in moral, and *homilitical* vertues. *Plato*, *Ariſtides*, *Seneca*, and multitudes more have outvied many profeſſed Chriſtians in juſtice, temperance, patience, &c. yet were perfect ſtrangers to the new creation. A man may be very ſtrict and temperate, free from the groſs pollutions of the world: and yet a perfect ſtranger to regeneration all the while. *John* 3. 10. 1.

Secondly, That many ſtrong convictions and troubles for ſin may be found where the new creature is never formed. Conviction indeed is an antecedent unto, and preparative for the new creature, as the bloſſomes of the tree are to the fruit that follows them; but as fruit doth not always follow where thoſe bloſſoms and flowers appear, ſo neither doth the new creature follow all convictions and troubles for ſin. Conviction is a common work of the Spirit both upon the elect and repro- 2.

bates: but the new creature is formed only in Gods elect. Convictions may be blaſted and vaniſh away, and the man that was under troubles for ſin, may return again with the dog to his vomit, and the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire, 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. but the new creature never periſhes, nor can conſiſt with ſuch a return unto ſin.

3. Thirdly, That excellent gifts and abilities fitting men for ſervice in the Church of God, may be where the new creature is not, for theſe are promiſcuouſly diſpenſed by the Spirit, both to the regenerate, and ungenerate, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name?* Gifts are attainable by ſtudy, prayer and preaching are reduced to an art. but regeneration is wholly ſupernatural. Sin in dominion is conſiſtent with excellent gifts, but wholly incompatible with the new creature. In a word, theſe things are ſo different in nature from the new creature, that they oft times prove the greateſt barrs, and obſtacles in the world to the regenerating work of the ſpirit. Let no man therefore truſt to things whereby multitudes deceive, and deſtroy their own ſouls. Reader, it may coſt thee many *an aking head* to obtain gifts, but thou wilt finde *an aking heart* for ſin, if ever God make thee a new creature.

Fourthly, Be convinced that multitudes of religious duties may be performed by men in whom the new creature was never formed. Though all new creatures perform the duties of religion, yet all that perform the duties of religion are not new creatures: regeneration is not the only root from which the duties of religion ſpring. *Iſa.* 58. 2. *Yet they ſeek me dayly, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordinance of their God, they aſk of me the ordinances of juſtice, they take delight in approaching to God.* Theſe are but weak and ſlippery foundations for men to build their confidence and hopes upon.

3d. *Uſe for Examination.*

Uſe 3. Next therefore, let me perſwade every man to try the ſtate of his own heart in this matter, and cloſely conſider, and weigh this great queſtion, Am I really and indeed a new creature, or am I an old creature ſtill, in the new creatures dreſs and habit?

habit? Some light may be given for the discovery hereof from the considerations of

The { 1. Antecedents / 2. Concomitants / 3. Consequents } of the new Creation.

First, weigh and consider well the *Antecedents* of the new creature: have those things past upon your souls which ordinarily make way for the new creature in whomsoever the Lord forms it?

First, hath the Lord opened the eyes of your understanding in the knowledge of sin, and of Christ? hath he shewed you both your disease and remedy by a new light shining from heaven into your souls? Thus the Lord doth whereever he forms the new creature. *Acts* 26. 18.

Secondly, hath he brought home the word with mighty power and efficacy upon your hearts, to convince and humble them? this is the method in which the new creature is produced. *Rom.* 7. 9. 1 *Thes.* 1. 5.

Thirdly, have these convictions overturned your vain confidences, and brought you to a great pinch, and inward distress of soul, making you to cry *what shall we doe to be saved?* These are the ways of the spirit in the formation of the new creature. *Acts* 16. 29. *Acts* 2. 37. If no such antecedent works of the spirit have passed upon your hearts, you have no ground for your confidence, that the new creature is formed in you.

Secondly, Consider the *concomitant* frames and workings of spirit which ordinarily attend the production of the new creature, and judge impartially betwixt God and your own souls, whether they have been the very frames and workings of your hearts.

First, have your vain spirits been composed to the greatest seriousness, and most solemn consideration of things eternal, as the hearts of all those are whom God regenerates? When the Lord is about this great work upon the soul of man, whatever vanity, levity, and sinful jollity was there before, it is banished from the heart at this time, for now heaven and hell, life and death, are before a mans eyes, and these are the most awful and solemn things that ever our thoughts conversed

with in this world: now a man of the moſt airy and pleaſant conſtitution when brought to the ſight and ſenſe of thoſe things, ſaith of *laughter it is mad, and of mirth what doth it?* Eccleſ. 2. 2.

Secondly, A lowly, meek, and humble frame of heart accompanies the new Creation: the ſoul is weary and heavy laden, *Matth.* 11. 28. convictions of ſin have plucked down the pride and loftineſs of the ſpirit of man, emptied him of his vain conceits: thoſe that were of lofty, proud, and bluſtring humours before, are meekened and brought down to the very duſt now: it is with them (to ſpeak alluſively) as it was with *Jeruſalem*, that lofty City, Iſa. 29. 1. 4. *Wo to Ariel, to Ariel, the City where David dwelt; thou ſhalt be brought down, and ſhalt ſpeak out of the ground, and thy ſpeech ſhall be low out of the duſt.* *Ariel* ſignifies the *Lyon of God*, ſo *Jeruſalem* in her proſperity was, other Cities trembled at her voice, but when God brought her down by humbling Judgements, then ſhe whiſpered out of the duſt: ſo it is in this caſe.

Thirdly, A longing thirſting frame of ſpirit accompanies the new creation: the deſires of the ſoul are ardent after Chriſt: never did the *hireling* long for the ſhadow, as the weary ſoul doth for Chriſt, and reſt in him: if no ſuch frames have accompanied that which you take for your new birth, you have the greateſt reaſon in the world to ſuſpect your ſelves under a cheat.

Thirdly, Weigh well the effects and *conſequents* of the new creature, and conſider whether ſuch fruits as theſe are found in your hearts and lives.

Firſt, Whereever the new creature is formed, there a mans courſe, and converſation is changed, Eph. 4. 22. *That ye put off concerning the former converſation the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful luſts, and be renewed in the ſpirit of your mind:* the new creature cannot but bluſh and be aſhamed of the old Creatures converſation, *Rom.* 6. 21.

Secondly, The new Creature continually oppoſes, and conflicts with the motions of ſin in the heart, Gal. 5. 17. *The ſpirit luſteth againſt the fleſh*: grace can no more incorporate with ſin, than oyle with water: contraries cannot conſiſt in the ſame ſubject longer than they are fighting with each other; if there be no conflict with ſin in thy ſoul, or if that

conflict

conflict be only betwixt the conscience and affections, *light* in the one strugling with *lust* in the other; thou wanteſt that fruit which should evidence thee to be a new creature.

Thirdly, The mind and affections of the new Creature are set upon heavenly and spiritual things: *Col.* 3. 1, 2. *Ephes.* 4. 23. *Rom.* 8. 5. if therefore thy heart and affections be habitually earthly, and wholly intent upon things below, driving eagerly after the world, as the great business and end of thy life: deceive not thy self, this is not the fruit of the New Creature, nor consistent with it.

Fourthly, The new Creature is a praying Creature, living by its daily Communion with God, which is its livelyhood and subsistence: *Zech.* 12. 10. *Acts* 9. 11. If therefore thou be a prayerless soul, or if in all thy prayers, thou art a stranger to Communion with God; if there be no brokenness of heart for sin in thy confessions, no melting affections for Christ and holiness in thy supplications; surely *Satan* doth but baffle, and delude thy overcredulous soul, in perswading thee that thou art a new Creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is restless after falls into sin until it have recovered peace and pardon, it cannot endure it self in a state of defilement and pollution, *Psal.* 51. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. It is with the conscience of a new Creature under sin, as it is with the *eye* when any thing offends it, it cannot leave twinkling and watering till it have wept it out; and in the very same restless state it is under the hiding of Gods face, and divine withdrawments: *Cant.* 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. If therefore thou canst sin, and sin again, without such a burthensome sense of sin, or restlesness, or solicitude how to recover purity, and peace, with the light of Gods countenance shining as in dayes past upon thy soul; delude not thy self, thou hast not the signs of a new Creature in thee.

4th. Use

4th. Uſe for Exhortation.

Uſe 4. If the new Creation be a ſound evidence of our intereſt in Chriſt, then hence let me perſwade all that are in Chriſt to evidence themſelves to be ſo, by walking as it becomes new Creatures.

The new Creature is *born from above*, all its tendencies are Heaven-ward; accordingly let your affections on things that are above, and let your converſation be in Heaven: if you live earthly and ſenſual lives, as others do; you muſt croſs your new Creature therein, and can thoſe acts be pleaſant unto you which are done with ſo much regret? wherein you muſt put a force upon your own ſpirits, and offer a kind of violence to your own hearts? Earthly delights and ſorrows are ſuitable enough to the unregenerate, and ſenſual men of the world: but exceedingly contrary unto that ſpirit by which you are renovated. If ever you will act becoming the principles and nature of new Creatures, then ſeek earthly things with ſubmiſſion, enjoy them with fear and caution, reſign them with cheerfulneſs and readineſs: and thus *let your moderation be known unto all men*, Phil. 4. 5. Let your hearts daily meditate, and your tongues diſcourſe about heavenly things, be exceeding tender of ſin, ſtrict and punctual in every duty; and hereby convince the world that you are men and women of another ſpirit.

5th. Uſe for Conſolation.

Uſe 5. Let every new creature be chearful and thankful: if God have renewed your natures, and thus altered the frame and temper of your hearts, he hath beſtowed the richeſt mercy upon you that Heaven or Earth affords: this is a work of greateſt rarity, a new creature may be called, one among a thouſand; 'tis alſo an everlaſting work never to be deſtroyed, as all other natural works of God (how excellent ſoever) muſt be, 'tis a work carried on by almighty power through unſpeakable difficulties and mighty oppoſitions, *Eph.* 1. 12. the exceeding greatneſs of Gods power goes forth to produce it; and indeed no leſs is required to enlighten

lighten the blind mind, break the rocky heart, and bow the ſtubborn will of man; and the ſame almighty power which at firſt created it, is neceſſary to be continued every moment to preſerve and continue it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. the new creature is a mercy which draws a train of innumerable and invaluable mercies after it, *Eph.* 2. 13, 14. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. when God hath given us a new nature, then he dignifies us with a *new name*, *Rev.* 2. 17. brings us into a *new Covenant*, *Jer.* 31. 33. begets us again to a *new hope*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. intitles us to a *new inheritance*, *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. 'tis the new creature which through Chriſt makes our perſons and duties acceptable with God, *Gal.* 6. 15. In a word, it is the wonderful work of God, of which we may ſay, *this is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes*; there are unſearchable wonders in its *generation*, in its *operation*, and in its *preſervation*. Let all therefore whom the Lord hath thus renewed, fall down at the feet of God in an humble admiration of the unſearchable riches of free grace, and never open their mouths to complain under any adverſe or bitter providences of God.

The

The Twenty seventh SERMON.

Sermon 27.

Text. GAL. 5. 24.

And they that are Christs have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.

Of the nature, principle and necessity of Mortification.

TWo great Tryals of our interest in Christ are finished, we now proceed to a third, namely *the mortification of sin: they that are Christs have crucified the flesh.* The scope of the *Apostle* in this context is to heal the unchristian breaches among the *Galatians* prevailing by the instigation of *Satan*, to the breach of brotherly love: to cure this he urges four weighty arguments.

First, From the great Commandment, to *love one another*, upon which the whole Law (*i. e.*) all the duties of the second Table do depend, *vers.* 14.

Secondly, He powerfully disswades them from the consideration of the sad events of their bitter contests, calumnies and detractions, *viz.* mutual ruine and destruction, *vers.* 15.

Thirdly, He disswades them from the consideration of the contrariety of these practices unto the Spirit of God, by whom they all profess themselves to be governed, from *vers.* 17, to the 23.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, He powerfully diſſwades them from theſe animoſities from the inconſiſtency of theſe or any other luſts of the fleſh with an intereſt in Chriſt: *they that be Chriſts have crucified the fleſh*, &c. *q. d.* you all profeſs your ſelves to be members of Chriſt, to be followers of him; but how incongruous are theſe practices to ſuch a profeſſion? Is this the fruit of the Dove-like ſpirit of Chriſt? Are theſe the fruits of your faith, and profeſſed mortification? Shall the ſheep of Chriſt ſnarl and fight like rabid and furious beaſts of prey? *Tantæne animis cœleſtibus iræ?* O how repugnant are theſe practices with the ſtudy of mortification which is the great ſtudy and endeavour of all that be in Chriſt! *They that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts.* So much for the order of the words; the words themſelves are a *propoſition* wherein we have to conſider both

— non ſecus ac Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia tauri, Frontibus incurrunt.

The { 1. Subject. 2. Predicate.

Firſt, The *Subject* of the propoſition, they that are Chriſts, *viz.* true Chriſtians, real members of Chriſt: ſuch as truly belong to Chriſt, ſuch as have given themſelves up to be governed by him, and are indeed acted by his Spirit: ſuch, all ſuch perſons (for the indefinite is equipollent to a univerſal) all ſuch, and none but ſuch.

1. *Verè Chriſtiani qui ad Chriſtum pertinent, qui ſe ei dedêre regendos.* Pol. Synopſis.

Secondly, The predicate, *they have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts*: by fleſh we are here to underſtand carnal concupiſcence, the workings and motions of corrupt nature: and by the affections we are to underſtand not the natural but the inordinate affections: for Chriſt doth not aboliſh and deſtroy, but correct and regulate the affections of thoſe that are in him: and by crucifying the fleſh we are not to underſtand the total extinction, or perfect ſubduing of corrupt nature, but only the depoſing of corruption from its regency and dominion in the ſoul: its dominion is taken away, though its life be prolonged for a ſeaſon: but yet as death ſurely, though ſlowly follows crucifixion (the life of crucified perſons gradually departing from them with their blood) ſo it is, juſt ſo in the mortification of ſin, and there-

2.

fore what the Apostle in this place calls crucifying, he calls in *Rom.* 8. 13. mortifying; *if ye through the Spirit do mortifie,* θανατοῦτε, if ye put to death the deeds of the body: but he chooses in this place to call it crucifying, to shew not only the conformity there is betwixt the death of Christ and the death of sin in respect of shame, pain and lingring slowness; but to denote also the principle, means and instrument of mortification, *viz.* the death or cross of Jesus Christ, in the vertue whereof believers do mortifie the corruptions of their flesh: the great arguments and perswasives to mortification being drawn from the sufferings of Christ for sin. In a word, he doth not say they that believe Christ was crucified for sin, are Christs: but they, and they only are his, who *feel* as well as *profess* the power and efficacie of the sufferings of Christ in the mortification, and subduing of their lusts and sinful affections. And so much briefly of the parts and sense of the words.

The Observation followeth.

DOCT.

Doct. *That a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred and concluded from the mortification of the flesh, with its affections and lusts.*

This point is fully confirmed by those words of the Apostle, Rom. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8. *if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin: now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

Mark the force of the Apostles reasoning: if we have been planted into the likeness of his death, *viz.* by the mortification of sin, which resembles or hath a likeness to the kind and manner of Christs death (as was noted above) then we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; and why so, but because this mortification of sin is an undoubted evidence of the union of such a soul with Christ, which is the very ground-work and principle of that blessed and glorious resurrecti-

reſurrection: and therefore he ſaith, verſ. 11. *Reckon ye alſo your ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, q. d.* reaſon thus with your ſelves, theſe mortifying influences of the death of Chriſt are unqueſtionable preſages of your future bleſſedneſs: God never taking this courſe with any but thoſe who are in Chriſt, and are deſigned to be glorified with him: the death of your ſin is as evidential as any thing in the world can be, of your ſpiritual life for the preſent, and of your eternal life with God hereafter. Mortification is the fruit and evidence of your union, and that union is the firm ground-work, and certain pledge of your glorification; and ſo you ought to reckon or reaſon the caſe with your ſelves as the word λογίζεσθε there ſignifies. Now for the ſtating and explicating of this point, I ſhall in the doctrinal part labour to open and confirm theſe five things.

1. What the mortification or crucifixion of ſin imports.
2. Why this work of the Spirit is expreſſed by crucifying.
3. Why all that are in Chriſt muſt be ſo crucified, or mortified unto ſin.
4. What is the true evangelical principle of mortification.
5. How the mortification of ſin evinces our intereſt in Chriſt.

And then apply the whole.

First, What the mortification or crucifixion of ſin imports. 1.

And for clearneſs ſake, I ſhall ſpeak to it both *negatively* and *poſitively*; ſhewing you what is not intended, and what is principally aimed at by the Spirit of God in this expreſſion.

First, The crucifying of the fleſh doth not imply the total abolition of ſin in Believers, or the deſtruction of its very being and exiſtence in them for the preſent: ſanctified ſouls ſo put off their corruptions with their bodies at death; this will be the effect of our future glorification, not of our preſent

Neg. 1. *Mortificari carnem non eſt eam ita perimi ut aut prorſus non ſit, aut nulla pravæ in homine deſiderio commoveat, quod in corpore mortis hujus non contingit, &c.* Eſtius in loc.

ſent ſanctification: it doth exiſt in the moſt mortified Believer in the world, *Rom.* 7. 17. it ſtill acteth and luſteth in the regenerate ſoul, *Gal.* 5. 17. yea notwithſtanding its crucifixion in Believers, it ſtill may in reſpect of ſingle acts ſurprize and captivate them, *Pſal.* 65. 3. *Rom.* 7. 23. This therefore is not the intention of the ſpirit of God in this expreſſion.

Secondly, Nor doth the crucifixion of ſin conſiſt in the ſuppreſſion of the external acts of ſin only, for ſin may reign over the ſouls of men whilſt it doth not break forth into their lives in groſs and open actions, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. *Mat.* 12. 43. *Morality* in the Heathens (as *Tertullian* well obſerves) did *abſcondere, ſed non abſcindere vitia, hide* them, when it could not *kill* them: many a man ſhews a white and fair hand, who yet hath a very foul and black heart.

Thirdly, The crucifixion of the fleſh doth not conſiſt in the ceſſation of the external acts of ſin: for in that reſpect the luſts of men may dye of their own accord, even a kind of natural death. The members of the body are the weapons of unrighteouſneſs as the *Apoſtle* calls them: age or ſickneſs may ſo blunt or break thoſe weapons that the ſoul cannot uſe them to ſuch ſinful purpoſes and ſervices as it was wont to do in the vigorous and healthful ſeaſon of life: not that there is leſs ſin in the heart, but becauſe there is leſs ſtrength and activity in the body. Juſt as it is with an old Soldier, who hath as much skill, policy and delight as ever in military actions; but age and hard ſervices have ſo infeebled him, that he can no longer follow the camp.

Fourthly, The crucifixion of ſin doth not conſiſt in the ſevere caſtigations of the body and penancing it by ſtripes, faſting and tireſome pilgrimages. This may paſs for mortification among *Papiſts*, but never was any luſt of the fleſh deſtroyed by this rigour. Chriſtians indeed are bound not to indulge and pamper the body which is the inſtrument of ſin, nor yet muſt we think that the ſpiritual corruptions of the ſoul feel thoſe ſtripes which are inflicted upon the body: ſee *Col.* 2. 23, 'tis not the vanity of ſuperſtition, but the power of true religion which crucifies and deſtroys corruption: 'tis faith in Chriſts blood, not the ſpilling of our own blood, which gives ſin the mortal wound.

Secondly,

Secondly, But if you enquire what then is implied in the mortification or crucifixion of ſin, and wherein it doth conſiſt? I anſwer, *Poſit.* 2.

Firſt, It neceſſarily implies the ſouls implantation into Chriſt and union with him; without which it is impoſſible that any one corruption ſhould be mortified, *they that are* [*Chriſts*] *have crucified the fleſh*: the attempts and endeavors of all others are vain and ineffectual: *when we were in the fleſh* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the motions of ſin which were by the Law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death*, Rom. 5. 7. ſin was then in its full dominion, no abſtinence, rigour, or outward ſeverity; no purpoſes; promiſes or ſolemn vows could mortifie or deſtroy it: there muſt be an implantation into Chriſt, before there can be any effectual crucifixion of ſin: what Believer almoſt hath not in the days of his firſt convictions tryed all external methods and means of mortifying ſin, and found it in experience to be to as little purpoſe as the binding of *Sampſon* with green Withs or Cords? But when he hath once come to act faith upon the death of Chriſt, then the deſign of mortification hath proſpered and ſucceeded to good purpoſe.

Errant in ipſa natura mortificationis Chriſtianæ, nam corporis afflictionem & injuriam reputant pro vera mortificatione, cum illa non ad carnem præcipue aut inferiorem animæ partem, ſed ad mentem & voluntatem, maximè pertineat. Davenant in Coloſſ. 256.

Secondly, Mortification of ſin implies the *agency of the Spirit of God* in that work, without whoſe aſſiſtances and aids all our endeavours muſt needs be fruitleſs: of this work we may ſay as it was ſaid in another caſe, Zech. 4. 6. *not by might, nor by power; but by my ſpirit ſaith the Lord.* When the *Apoſtle* therefore would ſhew by what hand this work of mortification is performed, he thus expreſſeth it, Rom. 8. 13. *if ye through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body; ye ſhall live:* the *duty* is ours, but the *power* whereby we perform it, is Gods: the ſpirit is the only ſucceſsful Combatant againſt the luſts that war in our members, *Gal.* 5. 17. 'tis true, this excludes not, but implies our endeavours; for it is we through the ſpirit that mortifie the deeds of the body; but yet all our endeavours without the Spirits aid and influence avail nothing.

Thirdly, The crucifixion of ſin neceſſarily implies *the ſubverſion of its dominion* in the ſoul: a mortified ſin cannot be a reigning ſin, *Rom.* 6. 12, 13, 14. Two things conſtitute the dominion of ſin, *viz.* the fulneſs of its power, and the ſouls ſub-

subjection to it. As to the fulneſs of its power, that riſes from the ſuitableneſs it hath, and pleaſure it gives to the corrupt heart of man: it ſeems to be as neceſſary as the right hand, as uſeful and pleaſant as the right eye, *Mat.* 5. 29. but the mortified heart is dead to all pleaſures and profits of ſin: it hath no delight or pleaſure in it: it becomes its burthen and daily complaint. Mortification preſuppoſes the illumination of the mind and conviction of the conſcience; by reaſon whereof ſin cannot deceive and blind the mind, or bewitch and enſnare the will and affections as it was wont to do, and conſequently its dominion over the ſoul is deſtroyed and loſt.

Fourthly, The crucifying of the fleſh implies a *gradual weakning of the power of ſin* in the ſoul. The death of the Croſs was a ſlow and lingering death, and the crucified perſon grew weaker and weaker every hour; ſo it is in the mortification of ſin: the ſoul is ſtill *cleanſing it ſelf from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, and perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And as the body of ſin is weakned more and more; ſo the inward man, or the new creature is *renewed day by day*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16. for ſanctification is a progreſſive work of the ſpirit: and as holineſs increaſes, and roots it ſelf deeper and deeper in the ſoul; ſo the power and intereſt of ſin proportionably abates, and ſinks lower and lower, until at length it be ſwallowed up in victory.

Fifthly, The crucifying of the fleſh notes to us the Believers *deſigned application of all ſpiritual means* and ſanctified inſtruments for the deſtruction of it: there is nothing in this world which a gracious heart more vehemently deſires and longs for, than the death of ſin, and perfect deliverance from it, *Rom.* 7. 24. the ſincerity of which deſires doth accordingly manifeſt it ſelf in the daily application of all Gods remedies, ſuch are daily watching againſt the occaſions of ſin, Job 31. 1. *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes*; more than ordinary vigilancy over their ſpecial or proper ſin, Pſal. 18. 23. *I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity*: earneſt cries to Heaven for preventing grace, Pſal. 19. 13. *keep back thy Servant alſo from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me*: deep humbling of ſoul for ſins paſt, which is an excellent preventive unto future ſins, 2 Cor. 7. 11. *in that he ſor-*

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rowed after a Godly ſort, what carefulneſs it wrought? care to give no furtherance, or advantage to the deſign of ſin, by making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the Luſts thereof, as others do, *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. willingneſs to bear the due reproofs of ſin, Pſal. 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs:* theſe and ſuch like means of mortification, regenerate ſouls are daily uſing; and applying in order to the death of ſin. And ſo much of the firſt particular what the mortification of ſin, or Crucifying of the fleſh implies.

Secondly, In the next place, we ſhall examine the reaſons why this work of the ſpirit is expreſſed under that *Trope* or figurative expreſſion of *Crucifying the fleſh.* Now the ground and reaſon of the uſe of this expreſſion, is the reſemblance which the mortification of ſin bears unto the death of the croſs: and this appears in five particulars. 2.

Firſt, The death of the croſs was a *painful death*, and the mortification of ſin is very painful work, *Matth.* 25. 29. 'tis the cutting off our right hands, and plucking out our right eyes: it will coſt many thouſand tears, and groans, prayers and ſtrong cries to heaven before one ſin will be mortified. Upon the account of the difficulty of this work, and mainly upon this account, the Scripture ſaith, *narrow is the way, and ſtrait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*, Matth. 7. 14. and that the righteous themſelves are *ſcarcely ſaved.*

Secondly, The death of the croſs was *univerſally painful*, every member, every ſenſe, every ſinew, every *nerve* was the ſeat, and ſubject of tormenting pain. So is it in the mortification of ſin: 'tis not this or that particular member, or act; but the whole body of ſin that is to be deſtroyed, *Rom.* 6. 6. and accordingly the conflict is in every faculty of the ſoul; for the Spirit of God by whoſe hand ſin is mortified, doth not combat with this or that particular Luſt only, but with ſin as ſin: and for that reaſon with every ſin, in every faculty of the ſoul. So that there are conflicts, and anguiſh in every part.

Thirdly, The death of the croſs was a *ſlow and lingering death:* denying unto them that ſuffered it the favour of a quick diſpatch. Juſt ſo it is in the death of ſin, though the Spirit

rit of God be mortifying it day by day; yet this is a truth ſealed by the ſad experience of all believers in the world, *that ſin is long a dying*: and if we ask a reaſon of this diſpenſation of God, among others, this ſeems to be one; corruptions in believers like the *Canaanites* in the Land of *Iſrael* are left to prove, and to exerciſe the people of God, to keep us watching and praying, mourning and believing; yea, wondering and admiring at the riches of pardoning, and preſerving mercy all our dayes.

Mortificatio peccati non fit uno momento, ſed opus eſt luctâ aſſiduâ: peccatum langueſcit ab initio mortificationis noſtræ, in progreſſu tabeſcit; ad extremum (i. e.) *in ipſa morte noſtra, abolebitur.* Origen in Epiſt. ad Rom.

Fourthly, The death of the Croſs was a very *opprobrious and ſhameful* death: they that dyed upon the croſs were loaded with ignominy: the crimes for which they dyed were expoſed to the publick view: after this manner dyeth ſin, a very ſhameful and ignominious death. Every true believer draws up a charge againſt it in every prayer, aggravates and condemns it in every confeſſion, bewailes the evil of it with multitudes of tears and groans, making ſin as vile and odious as they can find words to expreſs it, though not ſo vile as it is in its own nature. *O my God* (ſaith *Ezra*) *I am aſhamed, and even bluſh to look up unto thee*, Ezra 9. 6. So *Daniel* in his confeſſion: Dan. 9. 7. *O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of faces, as at this day.* Nor can it grieve any believer in the world to accuſe, condemn, and ſhame himſelf for ſin, whileſt he remembers and conſiders that all that ſhame and confuſion of face which he takes to himſelf, goes to the vindication, glory, and honour of his God: as *David* was content to be more vile ſtill for God, ſo it pleaſeth the heart of a Chriſtian to magnifie and advance the name and glory of God by expoſing his own ſhame, in humble and broken hearted confeſſions of ſin.

Fifthly, In a word, the death of the Croſs *was not a natural, but a violent death*: ſuch alſo is the death of ſin: ſin dyes not of its own accord, as nature dyeth in old men, in whom the *Balſamum radicale* or radical moiſture is conſumed: for if the Spirit of God did not kill it, it would live to eternity in the ſouls of men: 'tis not the everlaſting burnings, and all the wrath of God which lies upon the damned for ever, that can deſtroy ſin. Sin like a *Salamander* can live to eternity in the fire of Gods wrath: ſo that either it muſt dye a violent death by the hand of the Spirit, or never dyeth at all. And

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thus you ſee, why the mortification of ſin is *Tropically* expreſſed by the crucifying of the fleſh.

3. Thirdly, Why all that are in Chriſt muſt be ſo crucified, or mortified unto ſin: and the neceſſity of this will appear divers ways.

Firſt, From the inconſiſtency and contrariety that there is betwixt Chriſt and unmortified luſt, Gal. 5. 17. *theſe are contrary the one to the other.* There is a threefold inconſiſtency betwixt Chriſt and ſuch corruptions: they are not only contrary to the *holineſs* of *Chriſt*, 1 John 3. 6. *Whoſoever abideth in him ſinneth not; whoſoever ſinneth hath not ſeen him, neither known him, (i. e.)* whoſoever is thus ingulphed and plunged into the luſt of the fleſh, can have no communion with the pure and holy Chriſt: but there is alſo an inconſiſtency betwixt ſuch ſin and the *honour* of *Chriſt*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity:* as *Alexander* ſaid to a Soldier of his name, *recordare nominis Alexandri*, remember thy name is *Alexander*, and do nothing unworthy of that name. And unmortified luſts are alſo contrary to the *Dominion* and government of *Chriſt*, Luke 9. 23. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs daily and follow me:* theſe are the ſelf-denying terms upon which all men are admitted into Chriſts ſervice: and without mortification and ſelf-denial he allows no man to call him Lord and Maſter.

Secondly, The neceſſity of mortification appears from the neceſſity of conformity betwixt Chriſt the head, and all the members of his myſtical body: for how incongruous and uncomely would it be to ſee a holy heavenly Chriſt, leading a company of unclean, carnal and ſenſual members? Mat. 11. 29. *Take my yoak upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, q. d.* it would be monſtrous to the world to behold a company of *Lions* and *Wolves* following a meek and harmleſs *Lamb*: men of raging and unmortified luſts, profeſſing and owning me for their head of government: and again, 1 John 2. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked, q. d.* either imitate Chriſt in your *practice*, or never make pretenſions to Chriſt in your *profeſſion*: this was what the *Apoſtle* complained of, Phil. 3. 18. for *many walk of whom I have told you often, and*

now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt: men cannot ſtudy to put a greater diſhonour and reproach upon Chriſt, than by making his name and profeſſion, a cloak and cover to their filthy luſts.

Thirdly, The neceſſity of crucifying the fleſh appears from the method of Salvation as it is ſtated in the Goſpel. God every where requires the practice of mortification under pain of damnation, Mat. 18. 8. *Wherefore if thy hand, or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and caſt them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed; rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be caſt into everlaſting fire:* the Goſpel legitimates no hopes of ſalvation, but ſuch as are accompanied with ſerious endeavours of mortification, 1 John 3. 3. *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure:* 'twas one ſpecial end of Chriſts coming into the world, *to ſave his people from their ſins,* Mat. 1. 21. nor will he be a Saviour unto any who remain under the dominion of their own luſts.

Fourthly, The whole ſtream and current of the Goſpel put us under the neceſſity of mortification. Goſpel *precepts* have reſpect unto this, Col. 3. 5. *mortifie your members therefore which are upon the earth,* 1 Pet. 1. 15. *be ye holy for I am holy.* Goſpel *preſidents* have reſpect unto this, Heb. 12. 1. *wherefore ſeeing we alſo are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us,* &c. Goſpel *threatnings* are written for this end, and do all preſs mortification in a thundring *dialect,* Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall dye,* Rom. 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men:* the *promiſes* of the Goſpel are written deſignedly to promote it, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God:* but in vain are all theſe precepts, preſidents, threatnings and promiſes written in the Scripture, except mortification be the daily ſtudy and practice of profeſſors.

Fifthly, Mortification is the very ſcope and aim of our regeneration and the infuſion of the principles of grace: *if we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit,* Gal. 5. 25. in vain were the habits of grace planted, if the fruits of holi-

neſs

neſs and mortification be not produced: yea, mortification is not only the deſign and aim, but it is a ſpecial part even the one half of our ſanctification.

Sixthly, If mortification be not the daily practice and endeavour of Believers, then the way to Heaven no way anſwers to Chriſts deſcription of it in the Goſpel: he tells us, Mat. 7. 13, 14. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction; and many there be that go in thereat, becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it:* well then, either Chriſt muſt be miſtaken in the account he gave of the way to glory, or elſe all unmortified perſons are out of the way: for what makes the way of ſalvation narrow, but the difficulties and ſeverities of mortification?

Seventhly, In a word, he that denies the neceſſity of mortification, confounds all diſcriminating marks betwixt Saints and Sinners; pulls down the Pale of diſtinction, and lets the world into the Church, and the Church into the World: 'tis a great deſign of the Goſpel to preſerve the boundaries betwixt the one and the other, *Rom.* 2. 7, 8. *Rom.* 8. 1, 4, 5, 6, 13. but if men may be Chriſtians without mortification, we may as well go into the *Taverns*, *Ale-houſes*, or *Brothel-houſes*, among the roaring or ſottiſh crew of ſinners, and ſay, here be thoſe that are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt; here be his Diſciples and Followers; as go to ſeek them in the pureſt Churches, or moſt ſtrictly religious families: by all which the neceſſity of mortification unto all that are in Chriſt, is abundantly evidenced.

Fourthly, In the next place we are to enquire into the true *principle* of mortification: 'tis true there are many ways attempted by men for the mortification of ſin, and many rules laid down to guide men in that great work: ſome of which are very trifling and impertinent things; ſuch are thoſe preſcribed by *popiſh votaries:* but I ſhall lay down this as a ſure concluſion, that *the ſanctifying ſpirit is the only effectual principle of mortification:* and without him no reſolutions, vows, abſtinencies, caſtigations of the body, or any other external endeavours can ever avail to the mortification of one ſin: the *moral Heathens* have preſcribed may pretty rules and helps for the ſuppreſſion of vice. *Ariſtides*, *Seneca* and *Cato* 4.

were renowned among them upon this account: but yet as *Lactantius* well obſerves, *moral Philoſophie* did rather *abſcondere vitia, quam abſcindere*, hide it, rather than kill it: formal Chriſtians have alſo gone far in the reformation of their lives, but could never attain true mortification: formality pares off the excreſcences of vice, but never kil's the root of it: it uſually recovers it ſelf again, and their ſouls like a body not well purged, relapſe into a worſe condition than before, *Mat.* 12. 43, 44. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20.

This work of mortification is peculiar to the ſpirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 13. *Gal.* 5. 17. and the ſpirit becomes a principle of mortification in Believers two ways, namely

1. By the implantation of contrary habits.
2. By aſſiſting thoſe implanted habits in all the times of need.

1. Firſt, The ſpirit of God implants habits of a contrary nature, which are deſtructive to ſin, and are purgative of corruption, 1 *John* 5. 4. *Acts* 15. 9. Grace is to corruption what water is to fire; betwixt which there is both a *formal* and *effective oppoſition*: a contrariety both in nature and operation, *Gal.* 5. 17. There is a threefold remarkable advantage given us by grace for the deſtruction and mortification of ſin. For,

Firſt, Grace gives the mind and heart of man a contrary bent and inclination; by reaſon whereof ſpiritual and heavenly things become connatural to the regenerate ſoul, Rom. 7. 22. *For I delight in the Law of God, after the inner man*: ſanctification is in the ſoul as a living ſpring running with a kind of *central force* Heaven-ward, *John* 4. 14.

Secondly, Holy principles deſtroy the intereſt that ſin once had in the love and delight of the ſoul: the ſanctified ſoul cannot take pleaſure in ſin, or find delight in that which grieves God, as it was wont to do: but that which was the object of delight, hereby becomes the object of grief and hatred, Rom. 7. 15. *What I hate, that I do.*

Thirdly, From both theſe follow a third advantage for the mortification of ſin, in as much as ſin being contrary to the new nature, and the object of grief and hatred, cannot poſſibly

poſſibly be committed without reluctancy, and very ſenſible regret of mind: and actions done with regret, are neither done frequently nor eaſily. The caſe of a regenerate ſoul under the ſurprizals, and particular victories of temptation, being like that of a captive in war, who marches not with delight, but by conſtraint among his enemies. So the *Apoſtle* expreſſeth himſelf, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of ſin which is in my members*: thus the ſpirit of God promotes the deſign of mortification by the implantation of contrary habits.

Αἰχμαλωτίζω, *cùm ita quis capitur, ut nequeat luctari, nec ſe capienti obſiſtere.* Sclat.

Secondly, By aſſiſting thoſe gracious habits in all the times of need, which he doth many ways: ſometimes notably awakening and rouzing grace out of the dull and ſleepy habit, and drawing forth the activity and power of it into actual and ſucceſsful reſiſtances of temptations, as Gen. 39. 9. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Holy fear awakens firſt, and raiſes all the powers of grace in the ſoul to make a vigorous reſiſtance of temptation: the ſpirit alſo ſtrengthens weak grace in the ſoul, 2 Cor. 12. 9. *My grace is ſufficient for thee, for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs*: and by reaſon of grace thus implanted, and thus aſſiſted, *he that is born of God keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.* 2.

Fifthly, The laſt query to be ſatisfied is, how mortification of ſin ſolidly evinceth the ſouls intereſt in Chriſt; and this it doth divers ways, affording the mortified ſoul many ſound evidences thereof. As, 5.

Evidence 1.

Whatſoever evidences the indwelling of the holy ſpirit of God in us, muſt needs be evidential of a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt; as hath been fully proved before: but the mortification of ſin doth plainly evidence the indwelling of the ſpirit of God; for as we proved but now, it can proceed from no other principle: there is as ſtrong and inſeparable a connection betwixt mortification and the ſpirit, as betwixt the effect, and its proper cauſe, and the ſelf-ſame connection betwixt

betwixt the inbeing of the ſpirit, and union with Chriſt. So that to reaſon from mortification to the inhabitation of the ſpirit, and from the inhabitation of the ſpirit to our union with Chriſt; is a ſtrong ſcriptural way of reaſoning.

Evidence 2.

That which proves a ſoul to be under the *Covenant of Grace*, evidently proves its intereſt in Chriſt: for Chriſt is the head of that *Covenant*, and none but ſound Believers are under the bleſſings and promiſes of it; but mortification of ſin is a ſound evidence of the ſouls being under the Covenant of Grace, as is plain from thoſe words of the *Apoſtle*, Rom. 6. 12, 13, 14. *Let not ſin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſt thereof; neither yield ye your members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin; but yield your ſelves unto God, as thoſe that are alive from the dead, and your members as inſtruments of righteouſneſs unto God; for ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the Law but under Grace:* where the *Apoſtle* preſſeth Believers unto mortification by this incouragement, that it will be a good evidence unto them of a new Covenant intereſt: for all legal duties and endeavours can never mortifie ſin: 'tis the ſpirit in the new Covenant which produces this: whoever therefore hath his corruptions mortified, hath his intereſt in the Covenant, and conſequently in Chriſt, ſo far cleared unto him.

Evidence 3.

That which is the fruit and evidence of ſaving faith, muſt needs be a good evidence of our intereſt in Chriſt; but mortification of ſin is the fruit and evidence of ſaving faith, Acts 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*, 1 John 5. 4. *This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith*: faith overcomes both the allurements of the world upon one hand, and the terrors of the world upon the other hand; by mortifying the heart, and affections to all earthly things: a mortified heart is not eaſily taken with the enſnaring pleaſures of the world, or much moved with the diſgraces, loſſes and ſufferings it meets with from the world:

and

and ſo the ſtrength and force of its temptations is broken, and the mortified ſoul becomes victorious over it, and all this by the inſtrumentality of faith.

Evidence 4.

In a word, there is an intimate and indiſſoluble connection betwixt the mortification of ſin and the life of grace, Rom. 6. 11. *Reckon your ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt:* and the life of Chriſt muſt needs involve a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt: by all which is fully proved what was aſſerted in the obſervation from this Text. The Application follows in the next Sermon.

The

The Twenty eighth SERMON.

Sermon 28.

Text. GAL. 5. 24.

And they that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts.

From hence our Obſervation was,

DOCT.

Doct. *THat a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt may be regularly and ſtrongly inferred and concluded from the mortification of the fleſh, with its affections and luſts.*

Having opened the nature and neceſſity of mortification in the former Sermon, and ſhewn how regularly a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt may be concluded from it: we now proceed to apply the whole

By way of
1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Direction.
4. Examination.
5. Conſolation.

1ſt Uſe

1ſt Uſe for Information. *Uſe* 1.

Inference 1.

If they that be Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, *then the life of Chriſtians is no idle, or eaſie life*: the corruptions of his heart continually fill his hands with work, with work of the moſt difficult nature, ſin-crucifying work, which the Scripture calls the cutting off the right hand, and plucking out of the right eye: ſin-crucifying work is hard work; and it is conſtant work, throughout the life of a Chriſtian: there is no time or place freed from this conflict: every occaſion ſtirs corruption, and every ſtirring of corruption calls for mortification: corruptions work in our very beſt duties, *Rom.* 7. 23. and put the Chriſtian upon mortifying labours. The world and the Devil are great enemies and fountains of many temptations to Believers, but not like the corruptions of our own hearts: they only tempt *objectively* and *externally*; but this tempts *internally*, and therefore much more dangerous: they only tempt at times and ſeaſons; this continually, at all times and ſeaſons: beſide, what ever *Satan* or the *world* attempts upon us would be altogether ineffectual, were it not for our own corruptions, *John* 14. 30. So that the corruptions of our own hearts as they give us moſt danger, ſo they muſt give us more labour: our life, and this labour muſt end together; for ſin is long a dying in the beſt heart: thoſe that have been many years exerciſed in the ſtudy of mortification may haply feel the ſame corruption tempting and troubling them now, which put them into tears, and many times to their knees twenty or forty years ago. It may be ſaid of ſin as it was of *Hannibal*, that active enemy: that it will never be quiet whether conquering or conquered: and until ſin ceaſe working, the Chriſtian muſt not ceaſe mortifying. *Inference* 1.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. If mortification be the great work of a Chriſtian, *then certainly thoſe that give the corruptions of Chriſtians an occaſion to revive, muſt needs do them a very ill office*: they are not our beſt friends that ſtir the pride of our *hearts* by the flattery of their *lips*. The graces of God in others, I confeſs, are thankfully to be owned, and under diſcouragements, and contrary temptations to be wiſely and modeſtly ſpoken of: but the ſtrongeſt Chriſtians do ſcarcely ſhew their own weakneſs in any one thing more than they do in bearing their own praiſes. Chriſtian, thou knoweſt thou carrieſt Gunpowder about thee, deſire thoſe that carry fire to keep at a diſtance from thee: 'tis a dangerous *Criſis* when a proud heart meets with flattering lips, *auferte ignem, &c.* take away the fire (ſaid a holy Divine of *Germany* when his friend commended him upon his death-bed) for I have yet combuſtible matter about me: faithful, ſeaſonable, diſcreet reproofs are much more ſafe to us, and advantageous to our mortifying work; but alas, how few have the boldneſs or wiſdom duly to adminiſter them? 'Tis ſaid of *Alexander* that he bid a *Philoſopher* who had been long with him, to be gone; for, ſaid he, ſo long thou haſt been with me, and never reproved me; which muſt needs be thy fault: for either thou ſaweſt nothing in me worthy of reproof, which argues thy ignorance; or elſe thou durſt not reprove me, which argues thy unfaithfulneſs. A wiſe and faithful reprover is of ſingular uſe to him that is heartily engaged in the deſign of mortification: ſuch a faithful friend, or ſome malitious enemy muſt be helpful to us in that work.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. Hence it follows, *that manifold and ſucceſſive afflictions are no more than is neceſſary for the beſt of Chriſtians*: the mortification of our luſts require them all, be they never ſo many, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *if need be, ye are in heavineſs*: 'tis no more than need, that one loſs ſhould follow another to mortifie

mortifie an earthly heart: for ſo intenſely are our affections ſet upon the world, that it is not one, or two, or many checks of providence, that will ſuffice to wean and alienate them. Alas, the earthlineſs of our heart will take all this, it may be much more than this to purge the earthlineſs of them: the wiſe God ſees it but neceſſary to permit frequent diſcoveries of our own weakneſs, and to let looſe the tongues of many enemies upon us, and all little enough to pull down the pride and vanity that is in our hearts. Chriſtian, how difficult ſoever it be for thee to bear it; yet the pride of thy heart requires all the ſcoffs and jeers, all the calumnies and reproaches that ever the tongues or pens of thy bittereſt enemies, or miſtaking friends have at any time thrown upon thee. Such rank weeds as grow in our hearts will require hard froſts, and very ſharp weather to rot them: the ſtraying *Bullock* needs a heavy clog, and ſo doth a Chriſtian, whom God will keep within the bounds and limits of his commandments, *Pſal.* 119. 67. *Dan.* 11. 35.

Inference 4.

If they that be Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, *then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall*: 'tis true, if all that ſeem to be meek, humble and heavenly might paſs for Chriſtians, the number would be great: but if no more muſt be accounted Chriſtians than thoſe who crucifie the fleſh with its affections and luſts, O how ſmall is the number! For O how many be there under the Chriſtian name, that pamper and indulge their luſts, that ſecretly hate all that faithfully reprove them, and really affect none but ſuch as feed their luſts by praiſing and admiring them? How many that make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil its luſts? who cannot endure to have their corruptions croſt: how many are there that ſeem very meek and humble until an occaſion be given to ſtir their paſſion, and then you ſhall ſee in what degree they are mortified: the flint is a cold ſtone, till it be ſtruck, and then 'tis all fiery. I know the beſt of Chriſtians are mortified but in part: and ſtrong corruptions are oft-times found in very eminent Chriſtians; but they love them not

Inference 4. *Non eſt ſalvatus cruce Chriſti, qui non eſt crucifixus in Chriſto, qui non eſt membrum Chriſti.* Proſper.

so well as to purvey for them, to protect, defend and countenance them: nor dare they secretly hate such as faithfully reprove them; as many thousands that go under the name of Christians do. Upon the account of mortification it is said, *Matth.* 7. 13. *Narrow is the way, and strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Inference 5.

Inference 5. If they that be Christs have crucified the flesh (*i. e.*) mortification is their daily work and study; *then how falsely are Christians charged as troublers of the world, and disturbers of the civil peace and tranquillity of the times and places they live in?* Justly may they retort the charge, as *Elijah* did to *Ahab*, *It is not I that trouble Israel, but thou and thy Fathers house*: it is not the holy, meek and humble Christians that put the world into confusion: this is done by the prophane, and atheistical; or by the designing and hypocritical world, and laid at the innocent Christians door: as all the publick calamities which from the immediate hand of God, or by foreign, or domestick enemies befel *Rome*, were constantly charged upon Christians; and they condemned and punished, for what the righteous hand of God inflicted, or the working-heads of the enemies of that State without their privity contrived. The Apostle *James* propounds, and answers a very pertinent question unto this discourse, James 4. 1. *From whence come wars and fightings among you; come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?* O if all men did but study mortification and self-denial, and live as much at home in the constant work of their own hearts, as some men do; what tranquillity and peace, what blessed halcyon days should we quickly see! 'Tis true, Christians are always fighting and quarrelling, but it is with themselves and their own corrupt hearts and affections: they hate no enemy but sin, they thirst for the blood and ruine of none but of that enemy: they are ambitious of no victory, but what is over the corruptions of their own hearts: they carry no grudge except it be against this enemy sin, and yet these are the men

men who are moſt ſuſpected and charged of diſturbing the times they live in. Juſt as the *Wolf* accuſed the *Lamb* which was below him for pudling and defiling the ſtream. But there will be a day when God will clear up the innocency and integrity of his miſtaken and abuſed ſervants, and the world ſhall ſee it was not preaching and praying, but drinking, ſwearing, prophaneneſs and enmity unto true godlineſs, which diſturbs and breaks the tranquillity, and quietneſs of the times: mean time let innocency commit it ſelf unto God who will protect, and in due time vindicate the ſame.

Inference 6.

If they that be Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, *then whatſoever Religion, Opinion or Doctrine doth in its own nature countenance and encourage ſin, is not of Chriſt*: the doctrine of Chriſt every where teacheth mortification; the whole ſtream of the Goſpel runs againſt ſin; the doctrine it teacheth is holy, pure and heavenly; it hath no tendency to extol corrupt nature, and feed its pride by magnifying its freedom and power; or by ſtamping the merit and dignity of the blood of Chriſt upon its works and performances: it never makes the death of Chriſt a *Cloak* to cover ſin, but an *inſtrument* to deſtroy it: and whatſoever doctrine it is which nouriſhes the pride of nature to the diſparagement of grace; or incourages licentiouſneſs and fleſhly luſt, is not the doctrine of Chriſt; but a ſpurious off-ſpring begotten by Satan upon the corrupt nature of man. *Inference* 6.

Inference 7.

If mortification be the great buſineſs, and character of a Chriſtian, *then that condition is moſt eligible and deſirable by Chriſtians which is leaſt of all expoſed to Temptation.* Prov. 30. 8. *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient*: that holy judicious man was well aware of the danger lurking in both extreams; and how near they border upon deadly temptations, and approach the very precipice of ruine, that ſtand upon either ground: few Chriſtians have an head ſtrong and *Inference* 7.

and steddy enough to stand upon the pinacle of wealth and honour, nor is it every one that can grapple with poverty and contempt. A mediocrity is the Christians best external security, and therefore most desirable, and yet how do the corruptions, the pride and ignorance of our hearts grasp, and covet that condition which only serves to warm and nourish our lusts, and make the work of mortification much more difficult? 'Tis well for us, that our wise Father leaves us not to our own choice, that he frequently dashes our earthly projects, and disappoints our fond expectations. If children were left to carve for themselves, how often would they cut their own fingers?

Inference 8.

Inference 8. If Mortification be the great business of a Christian, *then Christian fellowship, and society duly managed, and improved, must needs be of singular use, and special advantage to the people of God.* For thereby we have the friendly help and assistance of many other hands, to carry on our great design, and help us in our most difficult business; if corruption be too hard for us, others this way come into our assistance, *Gal.* 6. 1. *Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.* If temptations prevail, and over-bear us that we fall under sin, 'tis a special mercy to have the reproofs and counsels of our brethren, who will not suffer sin to rest upon us, *Levit.* 19. 17. Whilst we are sluggish and sleepy, others are vigilant, and careful for our safety: The humility of another, reproves and mortifies my pride: The activity and liveliness of another, awakens and quickens my deadness: The prudence and gravity of another, detects and cures my levity and vanity: The heavenliness and Spirituality of another, may be exceeding useful both to reprove, and heal the earthliness, and sensuality of my heart. Two are better than one, but wo unto him that is alone. The Devil is well aware of this great advantage, and therefore strikes with special malice against embodied Christians, who are as a well disciplined army, whom he therefore more especially endeavours to rout and scatter by persecutions, that thereby particular Christians may be deprived of the sweet advantages of mutual society.

Inference

Inference 9.

How deeply hath ſin fixed its roots in our corrupt nature, that it ſhould be the conſtant work of a Chriſtians whole life, to mortifie and deſtroy it? God hath given us many excellent helps, his ſpirit within us, variety of ordinances and duties are alſo appointed as inſtruments of Mortification: And from the very day of Regeneration unto the laſt moment of diſſolution the Chriſtian is daily at work in the uſe of all ſanctified means external and internal, yet can never dig up, and deſtroy corruption at the root all his life long. The moſt eminent Chriſtians of longeſt ſtanding in Religion, who have ſhed Millions of tears for ſin, and poured out many thouſand Prayers for the Mortification of it; do after all find the grudgings of their old diſeaſe, that there is ſtill life and ſtrength in thoſe corruptions which they have given ſo many wounds unto in duty. O the depth and ſtrength of ſin! which nothing can ſeparate from us, but that which ſeparates our ſouls and bodies. And upon that account the day of a believers death, is better than the day of his birth. Never till then, do we put off our armour, ſheath our ſword, and cry victory, victory. *Inference 9.*

2. *Uſe for Exhortation.*

If they that are Chriſts have crucified the fleſh, &c. Then as ever we hope to make good our claim to Chriſt, let us give all diligence to mortifie ſin, in vain elſe are all our pretences unto Union with him. This is the great work, and diſcriminating character of a believer. And ſeeing it is the main buſineſs of life, and great evidence for heaven, I ſhall therefore preſs you to it by the following Motives and Conſiderations. *Uſe 2.*

1. *Motive.*

And firſt, methinks the comfort and ſweetneſs reſulting from Mortification ſhould effectually perſwade every believer to more diligence about it. There is a double ſweetneſs in Morti- *Motive 1.*

Mortification, one in the nature of the work, as it is a duty, a ſweet Chriſtian duty, another as it hath reſpect to Chriſt, and is evidential of our Union with him. In the firſt conſideration there is a wonderful ſweetneſs in Mortification, for doſt thou not feel a bleſſed calmneſs, chearineſs and tranquillity in thy conſcience, when thou haſt faithfully repelled temptations, ſucceſsfully reſiſted and overcome thy corruptions? Doth not God ſmile upon thee; conſcience incourage, and approve thee? Haſt thou not an heaven within thee? whilſt others feel a kind of hell in the deadly gripes, and bitter accuſations of their own conſciences, are covered with ſhame, and filled with horrours. But then, conſider it alſo as an evidence of the ſouls intereſt in Chriſt, as my Text conſiders it; and what an heaven upon earth muſt then be found in mortification! Theſe indeavours of mine to ſubdue and mortifie my corruptions, plainly ſpeak the Spirit of God in me, and my being in Chriſt, and O what is this! What heart hath largeneſs and ſtrength enough to receive and contain the joy and comfort which flowes from a cleared intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt! Certainly Chriſtians, the tranquillity and comfort of your whole life depends upon it: and what is life without the comfort of life, *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live,* (*i. e.*) you ſhall live a ſerene, placid, comfortable life, for it is corruption unmortified which clouds the face of God, and breaks the peace of his people, and conſequently imbitters the life of a Chriſtian.

2. *Motive.*

Motive 2. As the comfort of your own lives which is much, ſo your inſtrumental fitneſs for the ſervice of God which is much more, depends upon the Mortification of your ſins. 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. *If a man therefore purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſel unto honour; ſanctified and meet for the maſters uſe, and prepared unto every good work.* Where is the mercy of life but in the uſefulneſs and ſerviceableneſs of it unto God? It is not worth while to live ſixty, or ſeventy years in the world, to eat and drink, to buy and ſell, to laugh and cry, and then go down to the place of ſilence. So far as any man lives to God, an uſeful ſerviceable life to his praiſe and honour, ſo far only, and

no

no farther doth he anſwer the end of his being. But it is the purged mortified ſoul which is the veſſel of honour, prepared, and meet for the maſters uſe. Let a proud or an earthly heart be imployed in any ſervice for God, and you ſhall find that ſuch an heart will both ſpoil the work, by managing it for a ſelf end as *Jehu* did; and then devour the praiſe of it by a proud boaſt: *Come, ſee my zeal.* When the Lord would employ the prophet *Iſaiah* in his work and ſervice, his iniquity was firſt purged; and after that he was imployed, *Iſa.* 6. 6, 7, 8. Sin is the ſouls ſickneſs, a conſumption upon the inner man, and we know that languiſhing conſumptive perſons are very unfit to be imployed in difficult and ſtrenuous labours: Mortification ſo far as it prevails, cures the diſeaſe, recovers our ſtrength, and inables us for ſervice to God in our generations.

3. *Motive.*

Your ſtability, and ſafety in the hour of temptation depends upon the ſucceſs of your mortifying endeavours. Is it then a valuable mercy in your eyes to be kept upright and ſtedfaſt in the critical ſeaſon of temptation, when Satan ſhall be wreſtling with you for the Crown, and Prize of eternal life? Then give diligence to mortifie your corruptions. Temptation is a ſiege, Satan is the enemy without the walls, labouring to force an entrance, natural corruptions are the Traytours within, that hold correſpondency with the enemy without, and open the gate of the ſoul to receive him. It was the covetouſneſs of *Judas* his heart which overthrew him in the hour of Temptation. They are our fleſhly luſts which go over unto Satan in the day of Battel, and *fight againſt our ſouls*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. the corruptions (or infectious atomes which fly up and down the world in times of Temptation as that word μιάσματα imports) are through luſts, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. 'Tis the luſt within which gives a luſter to the vanities of the world without, and thereby makes them ſtrong temptations to us. 1 *John* 2. 16. Mortifie therefore your corruptions as ever you expect to maintain your ſtation in the day of trial: cut off thoſe advantages of your enemy, leſt by them he cut off your ſouls, and all your hopes from God. *Motive* 3. 2 Pet. 2. 20.

4. *Motive.*

Motive 4. As Temptations will be irresistible, so afflictions will be unsupportable to you without Mortification. My friends, you live in a mutable world, providence daily rings the changes in all the Kingdoms, Cities, and Towns all the world over. You that have husbands or wives to day, may be left desolate to morrow: you that have estates, and children now, may be bereaved of both before you are aware. Sickness will tread upon the heel of health, and death will assuredly follow life, as the night doth the day. Consider with your selves, are you able to bear the loss of your sweet enjoyments with patience? Can you think upon the parting hour without some tremblings? O get a heart mortified to all these things, and you will bless a taking as well as a giving God. 'Tis the living world, not the crucified world that raises such tumults in our souls in the day of affliction. How cheerful was holy *Paul* under all his sufferings! and what think you gave him that peace, and cheerfulness, but his mortification to the world? *Phil.* 4. 12. *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and suffer need.* *Job* was the mirrour of patience in the greatest shock of calamity, and what made him so, but the mortifiedness of his heart in the fullest enjoyment of earthly things? *Job* 31. 25.

5. *Motive.*

Motive 5. The reputation and honour of Religion is deeply concerned in the Mortification of the Professors of it: for unmortified professors will first or last be the scandals, and reproaches of it. The profession of religion may give credit to you, but to be sure you will never bring credit to it. All the scandals and reproaches that fall upon the name of Christ in this world flow from the fountain of unmortified corruption. *Judas* and *Demas*, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *Ananias* and *Saphira* ruined themselves, and became rocks of offence to others by this means. If ever you will keep Religion sweet, labour to keep your hearts mortified and pure.

6. *Motive*

6. Motive

To conclude, what an hard tug will you have in your dying hour except you get a heart mortified to this world, and all that is in it? your parting hour is like to be a dreadful hour without the help of mortification. Your corruptions like glew fasten your affections to the world, and how hard will it be for such a man to be separated by death? O what a bitter and doleful parting have carnal hearts from carnal things! whereas the mortified soul can receive the messengers of death without trouble, and as cheerfully put off the body at death, as a man doth his clothes at night: death need not pull, and hale; such a man goes half way to meet it. *Phil.* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Christian, wouldst thou have thy death-bed soft and easie? wouldst thou have an εὐθανασία, as the *Philosopher* desired for himself, an easie death without pain or terrour; then get a mortified heart: the *Chirurgeons* knife is scarce felt, when it cuts off a mortified member. *Motive* 6.

3d. Use for Direction.

Are you convinced and fully satisfied of the excellency and necessity of mortification, and inquisitive after the means, in the use whereof it may be attained? then for your help and encouragement I will in the next place offer my best assistance, in laying down the rules for this work. *Use* 3.

1. Rule.

If ever you will succeed and prosper in the work of mortification, then get and daily exercise more faith. Faith is the great instrument of mortification. *This is the victory* (or sword by which the victory is won, the instrument) *by which you overcome the world, even your faith,* 1 *John* 5. 4. By faith alone eternal things are discovered to our souls in their reality and excelling glory, and these are the preponderating things for the sake whereof self-denial and mortification becomes easie to believers; by opposing things eternal to things temporal we re- *Rule* 1.

reſiſt Satan, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. This is the ſhield by which we quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, *Eph.* 6. 16.

2. *Rule.*

Rule 2. Walk in daily communion with God, if ever you will mortifie the corruptions of nature, that is the Apoſtles own preſcription. *Gal.* 1. 16. *This I ſay then, walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.* Spiritual and frequent communion with God, gives manifold advantages for the mortification of ſin: as it is a bright glaſs wherein the holineſs of God and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of ſin, as it is oppoſite thereunto, are moſt clearly and ſenſibly diſcovered, than which ſcarce any thing can ſet a keener edge of indignation upon the ſpirit of a man againſt ſin. Beſides, all communion with God is aſſimilating, and transformative of the ſoul into his image, it leaves alſo a heavenly reliſh and ſavour upon the ſoul: it darkens the luſter and glory of all earthly things, by preſenting to the ſoul a Glory which excelleth. It marvelouſly improves, and more deeply radicates ſanctification in the ſoul, by all which means it becomes ſingularly uſeful, and ſucceſsful in the work of mortification.

3. *Rule.*

Rule 3. Keep your Conſciences under the awe, and in the fear of God continually, as ever you hope to be ſucceſsful in the Mortification of ſin. The fear of God is the great preſervative from ſin, without which all the external rules and helps in the world ſignifie nothing. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. Prov.* 16. 6. Not only from external and more open evils, which the fear of men as well as the fear of God may prevent, but from the moſt ſecret, and inward evils, which is a ſpecial part of Mortification. *Levit.* 19. 14. It keeps men from thoſe evils which no eye, nor ear of man can poſſibly diſcover. The fear of the Lord breaks Temptations baited with pleaſure, with profit and with ſecreſie. In a word, if ever you be cleanſed from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, it muſt be by the fear of God. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1.

4. *Rule*

4. *Rule.*

Study the vanity of the creature, and labour to get true notions of the emptineſs, and tranſitorineſs thereof, if ever you will attain to the Mortification of your affections towards it. 'Tis the falſe picture and image of the world in our fancy, that crucifies us with ſo many cares, fears, and ſolicitudes about it: and it is the true picture and image of the world, repreſented to us in the glaſs of the word, which greatly helps to crucifie our affections to the world. O if we did but know and believe three things about the world, we would never be ſo fond of it as we are, *viz.* the fading, defiling, and deſtroying nature of it: the beſt and ſweeteſt enjoyments of the world are but fading flowers, and withering graſs, *Iſai.* 14. 6. *James* 1. 10, 11. Yea, it is of a defiling as well as a fading nature, 1 *John* 5. 19. It lies in wickedneſs, it ſpreads univerſal infection umong all mankind, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Yea, it deſtroyes, as well as defiles multitudes of ſouls, *drowning men in perdition*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. Millions of ſouls will wiſh to eternity they had never known the riches, pleaſures, or honours of it: were this believed, how would men ſlack their pace, and cool themſelves in the violent and eager purſuit of the world! This greatly tends to promote Mortification.

Rule 4. Readers, if ever you would have a true ſight of the emptineſs and vanity of the creature, and get a mortified heart to the world; now is the time, for at this day the providence of God hath withered all the fading flowers of earthly delights, and ſhewed you the worlds back parts, as it is departing from you.

5. *Rule.*

Be careful to cut off all the occaſions of ſin, and keep at the greateſt diſtance from temptations, if ever you will mortifie the deeds of the body. The ſucceſs and prevalency of ſin mainly depends upon the wiles and ſtratagems it makes uſe of, to enſnare the incautelous ſoul, therefore the Apoſtle bids us keep off at the greateſt diſtance, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil*, *Prov.* 8. 8. *Come not nigh unto the door of her houſe.* He that dares venture to the very brink of ſin, diſcovers but little light in his underſtanding, and leſs tenderneſs in his conſcience, he neither knows ſin, nor fears it as he ought to do: and 'tis uſual with God to chaſtiſe ſelf-confidence by ſhameful lapſes into ſin.

Rule 5.

6. *Rule.*

6. *Rule.*

Rule 6. If you will ſucceſsfully mortifie the corruptions of your nature, never engage againſt them in your own ſingle ſtrength, *Eph.* 6. 10. When the Apoſtle draws forth Chriſtians into the field againſt ſin, he bids them *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* O remember what a meer feather thou art in the guſts of Temptation. Call to mind the height of *Peters* confidence, *though all men forſake thee, yet will not I,* and the depth of his fall, ſhame and ſorrow. A weak Chriſtian trembling in himſelf, depending by faith upon God, and graciouſly aſſiſted by him, ſhall be able to ſtand againſt the ſhock of temptation, when the bold and confident reſolutions of others (like *Pendleton* in our Engliſh ſtory) ſhall melt away as wax before the flames.

7. *Rule.*

Rule 7. Set in with the mortifying deſign of God in the day of thine affliction. Sanctified afflictions are ordered and preſcribed in heaven for the purging of our corruptions. *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin.* 'Tis a fair glaſs to repreſent the evil of ſin, and the vanity of the creature, to imbitter the world, and diſguſt thy affections towards it: fall in therefore with the gracious deſign of God, follow home every affliction with prayer, that God would follow it with his bleſſing. God kills thy comforts out of no other deſign but to kill thy corruptions with them. Wants are ordained to kill wantonneſs: poverty is appointed to kill pride, reproaches are permitted to pull down ambition: Happy is the man who underſtands, approves, and heartily ſets in with the deſign of God in ſuch afflicting providences.

8. *Rule.*

Rule 8. Bend the ſtrength of your duties and endeavours againſt your proper and ſpecial ſin: 'Tis in vain to lop off branches, whilſt this root of bitterneſs remains untouched: This was

Davids

Davids practice, *Pſal.* 18. 23. *I was alſo upright before him, and I kept my ſelf from mine iniquity.* We obſerve in natural men, that one faculty is more vigorous than another: We find in nature that our ſoil ſuits with this ſeed, rather than another: and every believer may find his nature and conſtitution inclining him to one ſin rather than another. As graces, ſo corruptions excel one another even in the regenerate. The power of ſpecial corruptions ariſes from our conſtitutions, education, company, cuſtom, callings, and ſuch like occaſions. But from whenceſoever it comes, this is the ſin that moſt endangers us, moſt eaſily beſets us, and according to the progreſs of mortification in that ſin, we may ſafely eſtimate the degrees of mortification in other ſins: ſtrike therefore at the life and root of your own iniquity.

9. *Rule.*

Study the nature and great importance of thoſe things which are to be won or loſt, according to the ſucceſs and iſſue of this conflict: your life is as a race, eternal glory is the prize, grace and corruption are the antagoniſts, and according as either finally prevails, eternal life is won or loſt. 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. *Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize: So run that ye may obtain.* This conſideration will make mortification appear the moſt rational and neceſſary thing to you in the whole world. Shall I loſe heaven for indulging the fleſh, and humouring a wanton appetite? God forbid. *I keep under my body* (ſaith *Paul*) *and bring it into ſubjection; leſt that by any means, when I have preached to others I my ſelf ſhould be a caſt-away*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 28. *Rule* 9.

10. *Rule.*

Accuſtom your thoughts to ſuch meditations as are proper to mortifie ſin in your affections, elſe all endeavours to mortifie it will be but faint and languid. To this purpoſe I ſhall recommend the following Meditations, as proper means to deſtroy the intereſt of ſin. *Rule* 10.

1. *Medi-*

1. *Meditation.*

Meditat. 1. Conſider the evil that is in ſin, and how terrible the appearances of God will one day be againſt thoſe that obey it, in the luſt thereof. *Rom.* 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men.* 1 *Theſ.* 1. 7, 8, 9. *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* Let your thoughts dwell much upon the conſideration of the fruits and conſequences of ſin: It ſhowes its faireſt ſide to you in the hour of temptation. O but conſider how it will look upon you in the day of affliction, *Numb.* 22. 23. In that day your ſin will find you out: think what its aſpect will be in a dying hour, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56. *The ſting of death is ſin.* Think what the frightful remembrances of it will be at the bar of Judgment, when Satan ſhall accuſe, conſcience ſhall upbraid, God ſhall condemn, and everlaſting burnings ſhall avenge the evil of it: ſuch thoughts as theſe are mortifying thoughts.

2. *Meditation.*

Meditat. 2. Think what it coſt the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to expiate the guilt of ſin by ſuffering the wrath of the great and terrible God for it in our room: the meditations of a crucified Chriſt, are very crucifying meditations unto ſin. *Gal.* 6. 14. He ſuffered unſpeakable things for ſin: it was Divine wrath which lay upon his ſoul for it: that wrath of which the prophet ſaith, *Nah.* 1. 5, 6. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* It was the unmixed, and unallayed wrath, poured out in the fulneſs of it; even to the laſt drop, and ſhall we be ſo eaſily drawn to the Commiſſion of thoſe ſins which put Chriſt under ſuch ſufferings? O do but read ſuch ſcriptures as theſe, *Luke* 22. 44. *Mat.* 26. 36, 37. *Mark* 14. 33. And ſee what a plight ſin put the Lord of glory into: how the wrath

wrath of God put him into a ſore amazement, a bloody ſweat, and made his ſoul heavy even unto death.

3. *Med.*

Conſider what a grief, and wound the ſins of believers are to the ſpirit of God, *Eph.* 4. 30. *Ezek.* 16. 43. *Iſa.* 63. 10. Oh how it vexes, frets, and grieves the holy Spirit of God! Nothing is more contrary to his nature. *Oh do not that abominable thing which I hate*, ſaith the Lord, *Jer.* 44. 4. Nothing obſtructs and croſſes the ſanctifying deſign of the Spirit as ſin doth, defacing and ſpoiling the moſt rare, and admirable workmanſhip that ever God wrought in this world, violating all the engagements laid upon us by the love of the Father, by the death of his Son, by the operations of his Spirit, in all his illuminations, convictions, compunctions, renovation, preſervation, obſignation, and manifold conſolations. Lay this meditation upon thy heart believer, and ſay, *ſicne rependis?* Doſt thou thus requite the Lord, O my ungrateful heart, for all his goodneſs? is this the fruit of his temporal, ſpiritual, common, and peculiar mercies, which are without number? *Med.* 3.

4. *Med.*

Conſider with your ſelves that no real good either of profit or pleaſure can reſult from ſin, you can have no pleaſure in it, whatever others may have, it being againſt your new nature; and as for that brutiſh pleaſure, and evanid joy which others have in ſin, it can be but for a moment, for either they muſt repent, or not repent: if they do repent, the pleaſure of ſin will be turned into the gall of *Aſps* here, if they do not repent, it will terminate in everlaſting howlings hereafter: that's a ſmart queſtion, *Rom.* 6. 21. *What fruit had ye in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed, for the end of thoſe things is death.* You that are believers muſt never expect any pleaſure in ſin, for you can neither commit it without regret, nor reflect upon it without ſhame and confuſion: Expect no better conſequents of ſin, than the woundings of conſcience, and diſmal cloudings of the face of God; that is all the profit of ſin. O let theſe things ſink into your heart. *Med.* 4.

5. *Med.*

Med. 5. Conſider what the damned ſuffer for thoſe ſins which the devil now tempteth you to commit: it hath deprived them of all good, all outward good, *Luke* 16. 25. all ſpiritual good, *Mat.* 25. 41. and of all hope of enjoying any good for ever. And as it hath deprived them of all good, ſo it hath remedileſly plunged them into all poſitive miſery. Miſery from without, the wrath of God being come upon them to the uttermoſt, and miſery from within, for *their worm dieth not*, *Mark* 9.44. The memory of things paſt, the ſenſe of things preſent, and the fearful expectations of things to come, are the nibblings and bitings of the worm of conſcience, at every bite whereof damned ſouls give a dreadful ſhriek, crying out, O the worm! the worm! Would any man that is not forſaken by reaſon, run the hazard of thoſe eternal miſeries for the brutiſh pleaſures of a moment?

6. *Med.*

Med. 6. Bethink your ſelves what inexcuſable hypocriſie it will be in you to indulge your ſelves in the private ſatisfaction of your luſts, under a contrary profeſſion of Religion: You are a people that profeſs holineſs and profeſſedly own your ſelves to be under the Government and Dominion of Chriſt, and muſt the worthy Name of Chriſt be only uſed to cloak and cover your luſts and corruptions which are ſo hateful to him? God forbid. You daily pray againſt ſin, you confeſs it to God, you bewail it, you pour out ſupplications for pardoning and preventing grace, are you in jeſt or earneſt in theſe ſolemn duties of Religion? Certainly, if all thoſe duties produce no mortification, you do but flatter God with your lips, and put a dreadful cheat upon your own ſouls. Nay, do you not frequently cenſure, and condemn thoſe things in others, and dare you allow them in your ſelves? What horrid hypocriſie is this? Chriſtians are dead to ſin, *Rom.* 6. 2. Dead to it by profeſſion, dead to it by obligation, dead to it by relation to Chriſt who died for it, and how ſhall they that are ſo many ways

ways dead to ſin live any longer therein? O think not that God hates ſin the leſs in you, becauſe you are his people: nay, that very conſideration aggravates it the more, *Amos* 3. 2. *Ipſa delicta & peccata fidelium odio ſunt, & diſplicent Deo, ſed odio ſimplici, non redundanti in perſonam,* Davenant, *in* Col. 1. 10.

7. *Med.*

Conſider with your ſelves what hard things ſome Chriſtians have choſen to endure and ſuffer, rather than they would defile themſelves with guilt; and ſhall every ſmall temptation inſnare and take your ſouls? Read over the *Eleventh Chapter to the Hebrews,* and ſee what the ſaints have endured to eſcape ſin: no torments were ſo terrible to them, as the diſpleaſure of God, and woundings of conſcience; and did God oblige them more by his grace and favour than he hath obliged you? O Chriſtians how can you that have found ſuch mercies, mercies as free, pardons as full as ever any ſouls found, ſhow leſs care, leſs fear, leſs tenderneſs of grieving God than others have done? Certainly, if you did ſee ſin with the ſame eyes they ſaw it, you would hate it as deeply, watch againſt it as carefully, and reſiſt it as vigorouſly as any of the Saints have done before you. *Med.* 7.

8. *Med.*

Conſider with your ſelves what ſweet pleaſure, rational and ſolid comfort is to be found in the mortification of ſin: 'Tis not the fulfilling of your luſts can give you the thouſandth part of that comfort and contentment that the reſiſtance of them, and victory over them will give you. Who can expreſs the comfort that is to be found in the chearing teſtimony of an acquitting and abſolving conſcience? 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. Remember what ſatisfaction and peace it was to *Hezekiah* upon his ſuppoſed death-bed, when he turned to the wall and ſaid, *Remember now O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy ſight, Iſa.* 38. 3. *Med.* 8.

4. *Uſe for Examination.*

Uſe 4. In the next place this point naturally puts us upon the Examination and trial of our own hearts, whether we who ſo confidently claim a ſpecial intereſt in Chriſt have crucified the fleſh with its affections and luſts; and becauſe two ſorts of perſons will be concerned in this Triall, *viz.* the weaker, and the ſtronger Chriſtians; I ſhall therefore lay down two ſorts of Evidences of Mortification, one reſpecting the ſincerity, and truth, the other reſpecting the ſtrength, and progreſs of that work in confirmed and grown Chriſtians, and both excluding falſe pretenders.

Firſt, There are ſome things that are Evidential of the truth and ſincerity of Mortification even in the weakeſt Chriſtians: as

Firſt, True tenderneſs of conſcience in all known ſins, one as well as another, is a good ſign ſin hath loſt its Dominion in the ſoul? O 'tis a ſpecial mercy to have a heart that ſhall ſmite and reprove us for thoſe things that others make nothing of: to check and admoniſh us for our ſecret ſins which can never turn to our reproach among men: this is a good ſign that we hate ſin as ſin: however through the weakneſs of the fleſh we may be enſnared by it, *Rom.* 7.15. *What I hate that I do.*

Secondly, The ſincere and earneſt deſires of our ſouls to God in prayer for heart-purging and ſin-mortifying grace, is a good ſign our ſouls have no love for ſin. Canſt thou ſay, poor believer, in the truth of thy heart; that if God would give thee thy choice, it would pleaſe thee better to have ſin caſt out, than to have the world caſt in; that thy heart is not ſo earneſt with God for daily bread, as it is for heart-purging grace? this is a comfortable evidence that ſin is nayled to the Croſs of Chriſt.

Thirdly, do you make conſcience of guarding againſt the occaſions of ſin? Do you keep a daily watch over your hearts and ſenſes, according to 1 *John* 5. 18. *Job* 31. 1. This ſpeaks a true deſign and purpoſe of Mortification alſo.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, do you rejoyce and bleſs God from your hearts when the providence of God orders any means for the prevention of ſin? Thus did *David*, 1 Sam. 25. 33. *And* David *ſaid to* Abigail, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael which ſent thee this day to meet me, and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed blood, and from avenging my ſelf with my own hand.*

Fifthly, In a word, though the thoughts of death may be terrible in themſelves, yet if the expectation and hope of your deliverance from ſin thereby, do ſweeten the thoughts of it to your ſouls, it will turn unto you for a teſtimony that you are not the ſervants and friends of ſin. And ſo much briefly of the firſt ſort of Evidences.

Secondly, There are other ſigns of a more deep and through Mortification of ſin in more grown and confirmed believers, and ſuch are theſe.

Firſt, The more ſubmiſſive and quiet any man is under the will of God in ſmart and afflicting providences, the more that mans heart is mortified unto ſin. *Pſal.* 119. 67, 71. *Col.* 1. 11.

Secondly, The more able any one is to bear the reproaches and rebukes of his ſin, the more Mortification there is in that man, *Pſal.* 141. 5.

Thirdly, The more eaſily any man can reſign and give up his deareſt earthly comforts at the call and command of God, the more progreſs that man hath made in the work of Mortification, *Heb.* 11. 17. 2 *Sam.* 15. 25.

Fourthly, The more power any man hath to reſiſt ſin in the firſt motions of it, and ſtifle it in the birth; the greater degree of Mortification that man hath attained, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24.

Fifthly, If great changes upon our outward condition make no change for the worſe upon our ſpirits, but we can bear proſperous and adverſe providences with an equal mind; then Mortification is advanced far in our ſouls, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12.

Sixthly, The more fixed and ſteady our hearts are with God in duty, and the leſs they are infeſted with wandring thoughts and earthly interpoſitions; the more Mortification there is in that ſoul. And ſo much briefly of the Evidences of Mortification.

5. *Uſe*

5. *Use for Consolation.*

Use 5. It only remains that I shut up all with a few words of consolation unto all that are under the Mortifying influence of the spirit. Much might be said for the comfort of such. In brief,

First, Mortified sin shall never be your ruine: 'tis only *raigning* sin that is *ruining* sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. Mortified sins, and pardoned sins shall never lye down with us in the dust.

Secondly, If sin be *dying*, your souls are *living*; for dying unto sin, and living unto God are inseparably connected, *Rom.* 6. 11.

Thirdly, If sin be dying in you, it is certain that Christ died for you, and you cannot desire a better Evidence of it, *Rom.* 6. 5, 6.

Fourthly, If sin be dying under the Mortifying influences of the spirit, and it be your daily labour to resist and overcome it, you are then in the direct way to heaven, and eternal salvation; which few, very few in the world shall find, *Luke* 13. 24.

Fifthly, To shut up all, if you through the spirit be daily mortifying the deeds of the body, then the death of Christ is effectually applied by the spirit unto your souls, and your interest in him is unquestionable: for they that are Christs have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, and they that have so Crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, are Christs.

Blessed be God for a Crucified Christ.

The Twenty ninth SERMON.

Sermon 29.

1 JOHN 2. 6.

Text.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

Of the Imitation of Christ in holiness of his life, and the necessity of it in all believers.

THe expres and principal design of the Apostle in this Chapter, is to propound marks and signs both *Negative* and *Positive*, for the trial and examination of mens claims to Christ; amongst which (not to spend time about the Coherence) my Text is a principal one: a trial of mens interest in Christ by their imitation of Christ. It is supposed by some Expositors that the Apostle in laying down this mark had a special design to overthrow the wicked Doctrine of the *Carpocratians* who taught (as *Epiphanius* relates it) that men might have as much Communion with God in sin, as in duty. In full opposition to which the Apostle lays down this Proposition, wherein he asserts the necessity of a Christ-like conversation in all that claim Union with him or interest in him. The words resolve themselves into two parts.

Viz.
1. A Claim to Christ supposed.
2. The only way to have our claim warranted.

First,

1. First, We have here a claim to Christ supposed; *if any man say he abideth in him*: abiding in Christ is an expression denoting proper and real interest in Christ, and communion with him: for it is put in opposition to those temporary, light and transient effects of the Gospel, which are called a morning dew, or an early cloud: such a receiving of Christ as that, *Mat.* 13. 21. which is but a present flash, a sudden vanishing pang: abiding in Christ notes a solid, durable and effectual work of the Spirit, throughly and everlastingly joyning the soul to Christ. Now, if any man whosoever he be (for this indefinite is equivalent to an universal term) let him never think his claim to be good and valid, except he take this course to adjust it.

2. Secondly, The only way to have this claim warranted, and that must be by *so walking even as he walked*: which words carry in them the necessity of our imitation of Christ. But it is not to be understood indifferently and universally of all the works or actions of Christ, some of which were extraordinary and miraculous; some purely mediatory and not imitable by us: in these paths no Christian can follow Christ; nor may so much as attempt to walk as he walked. But the words point at the ordinary and imitable ways and works of Christ: therein it must be the care of all to follow him, that profess and claim interest in him: they must so walk as he walked: this [so] is a very bearing word in this place; the emphasis of the Text seems to lie in it: however, certain it is that this *so walking* doth not imply an equality with Christ in holiness and obedience: for as he was filled with the spirit without measure, and anointed with that oyl of gladness above his fellows, so the purity, holiness and obedience of his life is never to be matched and equallized by any of the Saints. But this *so walking* only notes a sincere intention, design and endeavour to imitate and follow him in all the paths of holiness and obedience according to the different measures of grace received. The life of Christ is the Believers copy, and though the Believer cannot draw one line or letter exact as his copy is, yet his eye is still upon it, he is looking unto Jesus, *Heb.* 12. 2. and labouring to draw all the lines of his life as agreeably as he is able unto Christ his pattern.

Hence

Hence the Obſervation is,

DOCT.

That every man is bound to the imitation of Chriſt under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Chriſt. *Doct.*

The Saints imitation of Chriſt is ſolemnly enjoined by many great and expreſs commands of the Goſpel: ſo you find it, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *But as he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*: So Eph. 5. 1, 2. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love as Chriſt alſo hath loved us.* Chriſtians (ſaith *Bernard*) receive this name from Chriſt: and it is very meet that as they inherit his name, ſo they ſhould alſo imitate his holineſs. Now to ſtate the method of this Diſcourſe, it will be needful to diſcuſs and open three things in the doctrinal part.

Chriſtiani à Chriſto nomen acceperunt, & operæ pretium eſt, ut ſicut ſunt hæredes nominis, ita ſint imitatores ſanctitatis. Bern. ſent. lib. p. 436.

1. What the Saints imitation of Chriſt ſuppoſes and comprizes.
2. In what particulars they are eſpecially bound to imitate Chriſt.
3. Why no claim to Chriſt is valid without this imitation of him.

And then apply the whole in divers Uſes.

Firſt, What the Saints imitation of Chriſt ſuppoſeth and comprizeth. Now there are divers great and weighty truths ſuppoſed and implyed in this imitation of Chriſt; or walking as he walked, *viz.* 1.

Firſt, It ſuppoſes that no Chriſtian is or may pretend to be a rule to himſelf, to act according to the dictates of his own will and pleaſure: for as no man hath wiſdom enough to direct and govern himſelf; ſo if his own will were made the rule of his own actions, it would be the higheſt invaſion of the divine prerogative that could be imagined: *I know, O Lord,* (ſaith *Jeremy*) *that the way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in him that walketh to direct his own ſteps,* Jer. 10. 23. We may as well pretend to be our own makers as our own

guides. It is a pretty observation of *Aquinas*, that if the workmans hand were the rule of his work, it were impossible he should ever err in working: and if the will of man were the only law and guide of his way, we might then say no man would sin in his walking. The Apostle indeed saith of the Heathens, Rom. 2. 14. *that they are a law to themselves*; but it is not his meaning that their will is their law, but the law of God engraven upon their hearts: the light and dictates of their own Consciences, did oblige and bind them as a law.

Secondly, This imitation of Christ implies, that as no man is or may pretend to be his own guide, so no meer man how wise or holy soever he be, may pretend to be a rule to other men: but Christ is the rule of every mans way and walking. 'Tis true indeed, the Apostle saith, *We should be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*, Heb. 6. 12. And again, James 5. 10. *Take my Brethren the Prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction and of patience:* but you must always remember that there is a twofold rule.

1. *Regula regulans*, the rule, ruling.
2. *Regula regulata*, the rule ruled.

The wisest and holiest among men may pretend no higher than *a ruled rule*. The great Apostle, though filled with as great a measure of the spirit of wisdom and holiness as ever was possessed by any meer man; yet goes no higher than this, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ*. The best of men are but men at best: they have their errors and defects which they freely acknowledge: and where they differ from Christ, 'tis our duty to differ from them: we may not pin our faith upon any mans sleeve, for we know not where he will carry it. It was the commendation which *Paul* gave of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thes. 1. 6. *And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord*. The noble *Bereans* were also commended for searching the Scriptures and examining the *Apostles* doctrine by it: and it was a good reply of the *Father*, to a clamorous disputant crying hear me, hear me, I will neither

Nec ego te, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Christum. Aug.

neither hear thee, nor do thou hear me; but let us both hear Chriſt.

Thirdly, The imitation of Chriſt implies the neceſſity of ſanctification in all his followers: for as much as it is impoſſible there ſhould be a practical conformity in point of obedience, where there is not a conformity in ſpirit and principle; all external conformity to Chriſts practice, depends upon an internal conformity to Chriſt in the principle and ſpirit of holineſs. 'Tis very plain from *Ezek.* 11. 19, 20. that a new heart muſt be given us, and a new ſpirit put into us, before we can walk in Gods ſtatutes: we muſt firſt live in the ſpirit, before we can walk in the ſpirit, *Gal.* 5. 25.

Fourthly, The imitation of Chriſt plainly holds forth this, that Chriſtian religion is a very preciſe and ſtrict religion; no way countenancing licentiouſneſs, or indulging men in their luſts: it allows no man to walk looſely and inordinately; but rejects every mans claim to Chriſt who ſtudies and labours not to tread exactly in the footſteps of his holy and heavenly example. Prophaneneſs and licentiouſneſs therefore can find no ſhelter or protection under the wing of the Goſpel: this is the univerſal rule laid upon all the profeſſors of the Chriſtian Religion: *Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. (*i. e.*) let him either put on the life of Chriſt, or put off the name of Chriſt: let him ſhew the hand of a Chriſtian in works of holineſs and obedience, or elſe the tongue and language of a Chriſtian muſt gain no belief or credit.

Fifthly, The imitation of Chriſt neceſſarily implies the defectiveneſs and imperfection of the beſt men in this life: for if the life of Chriſt be our pattern; the beſt and holieſt of men muſt confeſs they come ſhort in every thing of the rule of their duty. Our pattern is ſtill above us; the beſt of men are aſhamed when they compare their lives with the life of Chriſt. 'Tis true, a vain heart may ſwell with pride when a man compares himſelf with other men: thus meaſuring our ſelves by our ſelves, and comparing our ſelves among our ſelves we ſhew our folly, and nouriſh our pride: but if any man will compare his own life with Chriſts, he will find abundant cauſe at every time, and in every thing to be humbled. *Paul* was a great proficient in holineſs and obedience;

he had been long striving to come up to the top of holiness; yet when he looks up and sees the life of Christ, and rule of duty so far above him, he reckons himself still but at the foot of the Hill, Phil. 3. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend, that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. q. d.* Alas I am not come up to my duty; I am a great way behind, but I am following after, if at last I may attain it: perfection is in my expectation and hope at last, not in my attainment here.

Primum & optimum in unoquoque genere est regula & mensura cæterorum.

Sixthly, The imitation of Christ as our general rule and pattern, necessarily implies the transcending holiness of the Lord Jesus. His holiness is greater than the holiness of all creatures: for only that which is first and best in every kind, is the rule and measure of all the rest. 'Tis the height of Saints ambition to be made conformable to Christ, *Phil.* 3. 10. Christ hath a double perfection, a perfection of *being*, and a perfection of *working*: his life was a perfect rule, no blot or error could be found therein; for he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners:* and such an High-Priest became us as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 7. 26. The conformity of professors to Christs example is the test and measure of all their graces: the nearer any man comes to this pattern, the nearer he approaches towards perfection.

Seventhly, The Christians imitation of Christ, under penalty of losing his claim to Christ, necessarily implies sanctification and obedience to be the evidences of our justification and interest in Christ: assurance is unattainable without obedience, we can never be comfortable Christians except we be strict and regular Christians, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; and upon the Israel of God.* A loose and careless conversation can never be productive of true peace and consolation, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our Conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God; we have had our conversation in the world.* Let men talk what they will of the immediate sealings and comforts of the spirit without any regard to holiness, or respect to obedience; Sure I am, whatever delusion they meet with in that way; true peace and consolation is only

only to be expected and found here: *The fruit of righteouſneſs ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs quietneſs, and aſſurance for ever:* We have it not for our holineſs, but we always have it in the way of holineſs. And ſo much of the firſt particular, namely, what the imitation of Chriſt implies and comprizes in it.

Secondly, In the next place we are to enquire in what things all that profeſs Chriſt are obliged to the imitation of him; or what thoſe excellent graces in the life of Chriſt were, which are propounded as patterns to the Saints. 2.

The life of Chriſt was a living law; all the graces and vertues of the Spirit were repreſented in their glory, and brighteſt luſter in his converſation upon earth: never man ſpake as he ſpake; never any lived as he lived: *we beheld his glory* (ſaith the Evangeliſt) *as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* John 1. 14. But to deſcend to the particular imitable excellencies in the life of Chriſt, which are high patterns and excellent rules for the converſations of his people, we ſhall from among many others ſingle out the ten following Particulars which we are obliged to imitate.

Quid vobis cum virtutibus qui virtutem Chriſti ignoratis? ubinam, quæſo, vera prudentia, niſi in Chriſti doctrina? ubi vera temperantia, niſi in Chriſti vita? ubi vera fortitudo, niſi in Chriſti paſſione? Bernard.

Pattern 1.

And firſt of all, the purity and holineſs of the life of Chriſt is propoſed as a glorious pattern for the Saints imitation, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation:* ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ἀναστροφῇ, in every creek and turning of your lives. There is a twofold holineſs in Chriſt; the holineſs of his *nature* and the holineſs of his *practice*; his holy being, and his holy working: this obligeth all that profeſs intereſt in him, to a twofold holineſs, *viz.* holineſs *in actu primo*, in the principles of it in their hearts; and holineſs *in actu ſecundo*, in the practice and exerciſe of it in their converſations: 'tis very true, we cannot in all reſpects imitate the holineſs of Chriſt; for he is *eſſentially* holy; proceeding by nature, as a pure beam of holineſs from the Father: and when he was incarnate he came into the world immaculate, and pure from the leaſt ſtain of pollution; therefore it was ſaid, Luke 1. 25. *That holy thing which ſhall be born.*

born of thee, shall be called the Son of God: in this we can never be like Christ in the way of our production: for *who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? not one.* The Lord Jesus was also *efficiently* holy, *(i.e.)* he makes others holy: therefore his sufferings and blood are called a fountain opened *for sin and for uncleanness*, *(i.e.)* to cleanse other mens souls, *Zech.* 13. 1. in this Christ also is inimitable: no man can make himself or others holy. That's a great truth though it will hardly go down with proud nature, *minus est te fecisse hominem, quam sanctum*, we may sooner make our selves to be men than to be Saints. Beside, Christ is infinitely holy as he is *God*, and there are no stints or measures set to his holiness as *Mediator*, John 3. 34. *for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.* But notwithstanding these excepted respects, the holiness of Christ is propounded as a pattern for our imitation six ways.

First, He was *truly* and *sincerely* holy, without fiction or simulation: and this appeared in the greatest trial of the truth of holiness that ever was made in this world, John 14. 30. *The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me*: when he was agitated and shaken with the greatest temptations, no dregs appeared; he was like pure fountain-water in a Crystal Glass. The hypocrite makes shew of more holiness than he hath: but there was more holiness in Christ, than ever appeared to the view of men. We may say of the way of Christ, what the *Philosopher* saith of the *milky way* in the Heavens; that those faint streams of light which we see there, are nothing else but the reflection of innumerable Stars which shine there, though they be invisible to us: there was much inward beauty in him, and so there ought to be in all his followers; our holiness, like Christs, must be sincere and real, *Eph.* 4. 24. shining with inward beauty towards God rather than towards men.

Galaxia est maxima frequentia minimarum stellarum, quæ præ exiguitate ad nostrum aspectum distinctè pervenire nequeunt, ut cæteræ stellæ, atque ita inter se lumen commiscent, & confundunt, Conimb. de Meteor. cap 2.

Secondly, Christ was *uniformly* holy, at one time as well as another; in one place and company as well as another; he was still like himself, an holy Christ: one and the same tenour of holiness ran thoughout his whole life, from first to last: so must it be with all his people: holy in all manner of conversation. Christians, look to your copy, and be sure to imitate Christ in this; write fair after your Copy; let there not

not be here a word and there a blot; one part of your life heavenly, and pure, and another earthly, and dreggy: or (as one expreſſes it) now an heavenly rapture, and by and by a fleſhly frolick.

Thirdly, Chriſt was *exemplarily* holy: a pattern of holineſs to all that came nigh him, and converſed with him. O imitate Chriſt in this. It was the commendation of the *Theſſalonians* that they *were enſamples to all that believed in Macedonia, and Achaia, and that in every place their faith to God-ward was ſpread abroad*, 1 Theſ. 1. 7, 8. Let no man go out of your company without conviction or edification; ſo exemplary were the primitive Chriſtians, *Phil.* 3. 17.

Fourthly, Chriſt was *ſtrictly* and *preciſely* holy; *which of you convinceth me of ſin?* The moſt envious and obſerving eyes of his greateſt enemies could not pick a hole, or find a flaw in any of his words or actions: 'tis our duty to imitate Chriſt in this, Phil. 2. 15. *That ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, among whom ye ſhine* (or as the word may be rendred imperatively, *among whom ſhine ye,*) *as lights in the world.* Thus it becomes the followers of Chriſt to walk circumſpectly or preciſely, *for ſo is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15. φαίνετε ὡς φωστῆρες.

Fifthly, Chriſt was perſeveringly holy, holy to the laſt breath; as he began, ſo he finiſhed his whole life in a conſtant courſe of holineſs: in this alſo he is our great pattern: it becomes not any of his people to begin in the ſpirit, and end in the fleſh: but on the contrary, their laſt works ſhould be more than their firſt; *let him that is holy be holy ſtill*, Rev. 22. 11.

Sixthly, In a word, the delight of Chriſt was only in holy things and holy perſons; they were his choſen companions: even ſo it becometh his people to have all their delights in the ſaints and in the excellent of the earth, *Pſal.* 16. 3. Thus Chriſtians, be ye followers of Chriſt in his holineſs: God hath decreed this conformity to Chriſt in all that ſhall be ſaved, *Rom.* 8. 29. he baniſheth all unholy ones from his gracious preſence for ever, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Heb.* 12. 14. The deſign of Chriſt in dying for you was to make you pure and holy, *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. O then ſtudy holineſs; eye your pattern; and as-

dear

dear Children be ye followers of your most holy Lord Jesus Christ.

Pattern 2.

The *obedience* of Christ to his Fathers will is a pattern for the imitation of all Christians: 'tis said of Christ, Heb. 5.8. *that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered*; a Text which labours under some difficulties: Christ learned obedience, and yet was not ignorant before of what he learned afterward: he was perfect in knowledge; and yet the Apostle speaks of him as a proficient in the School of Wisdom. But we must consider there are two ways of learning, *viz.*

By { 1. The comprehension of the mind.
2. By the experience of the sense.

Christ as God was perfect in knowledge; nothing could be added to him: but when he became man, then he came to understand or learn by sufferings as the Apostle here speaks; which though it added nothing to his knowledge, yet it was a new method and way of knowing. Now the obedience of Christ is our pattern whereunto we are obliged (as ever we will warrant our claim of interest in him) to conform our selves in the following properties of it.

First, Christs obedience was free and voluntary, not forced or compulsory: it was so from the very first undertakement of the work of our redemption, Prov. 8.30, 31. *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him: rejoycing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.* And when the fulness of time was come for executing that blessed design which had been in prospect from all eternity, how chearfully did the will of Christ echo to his Fathers call, Psal. 40.7. *Then said I, Loe I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my heart.* Nor was this a flourish before he came into the field, and saw the enemy; for he laid down his life with the greatest chearfulness and spontaneity that could be,

John

John 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my father love me, becauſe I lay down my life that I might take it again; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf:* and indeed the voluntarineſs of Chriſt in his obedience unto death gave his death the nature and formality of a ſacrifice, for ſo all ſacrifices ought to be offered, *Lev.* 1. 3. and ſo Chriſts ſacrifice was offered unto God, *Eph.* 5. 2. It was as grateful a work to Chriſt to dye for us, as it was to *Moſes* his mother to take him to nurſe from the hand of *Pharaohs* daughter. O Chriſtians, tread in the ſteps of Chriſts example: do nothing grudgingly for God, let not his commands be grievous, 1 *John* 5. 3. If you do any thing for God willingly, you have a reward; if otherwiſe, a diſpenſation only is committed to you, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. Obedience in Chriſt was an abaſement to him, but in you a very great honour and advancement, you have reaſon therefore to obey with cheerfulneſs.

Secondly, The obedience of Chriſt was univerſal and compleat, he was obedient to all the will of God, making no demur to the hardeſt ſervice impoſed by the will of God upon him, *Phil.* 2. 8. *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Croſs*: and though it's true the humanity of Chriſt recoyled and ſtaggered when that bitter cup of the wrath of God was given him to drink; yet how ſoon was that innocent averſation overcome in him by a perfect ſubmiſſion? *nevertheleſs not my will, but thine be done*, *Mat.* 26. 39. Chriſtians here is your pattern: happy art thou Reader, if thou canſt ſay when God calls thee to ſuffering, and ſelf denying work, I am filled with the will of God. Such was *Pauls* obedience. *Acts* 21. 13. *I am ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus.*

Thirdly, The obedience of Chriſt was ſincere and pure, without any baſe or by end, purely aiming at the glory of God. *Joh.* 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do.* He ſought not honour of men. This was the great deſire of his ſoul, *John* 12. 28. *Father glorifie thy name*: and truly the choiceſt part of your obedience conſiſts in the purity of your ends, and in this Chriſt is propounded as your pattern, *Phil.* 2. 3, 4, 5.

Fourthly, The ſtreams of Chriſts obedience flowed from the ſpring and fountain of ardent love to God. *Joh.* 14. 31.

But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even ſo I do: Thus let all your obedience to God turn upon the hinge of love. For *love is the fulfilling of the law*, *Rom.* 13. 10. Not as if no other duty but love were required in the law; but becauſe no act of obedience is acceptable to God, but that which is performed in love.

Fifthly, In a word, The obedience of Chriſt was conſtant, he was obedient unto the death, he was not weary of his work to the laſt. Such a patient continuance in well doing is one part of your conformity to Chriſt, *Rom.* 2. 7. 'tis laid upon you by his own expreſs command, and a command back'd with the moſt incouraging promiſe, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*

Pattern 3.

Vulpibus in ſaltu rupes exciſa latebras Præbet & aereis avibus dat ſylva quietem: Aſt hominis nato nullis ſuccedere tectis Eſt licitum. Heinſius.

The *ſelf-denial* of Chriſt is the pattern of believers, and their Conformity unto it is their indiſpenſable duty. *Phil.* 2. 4, 5, 6. 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* Jeſus Chriſt for the glory of God, and the love he bare to the elect, denied himſelf all the delights and pleaſures of this world, *Mat.* 20. 28. *The Son of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſom for many*, he was all his life long in the world *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*, *Iſa.* 53. 3. more unprovided of comfortable accommodations, than the birds of the air, or beaſts of the earth. *Luke* 9. 58. *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* Yet this was the leaſt part of Chriſts ſelf-denial: what did he not deny when he left the boſom of his Father with the ineffable delights and pleaſures he there enjoyed from Eternity, and inſtead thereof to drink the cup, the bitter cup of his Fathers wrath for our ſakes? O Chriſtians, look to your pattern; and imitate your ſelf-denying Saviour. There is a threefold ſelf you are to deny for Chriſt.

Firſt, Deny your *natural ſelf* for him, *Luke* 14. 26. Hate your own life in competition with his glory as well as your natural luſts, *Titus* 2. 12.

Secondly, Deny your *Civil ſelf* for Chriſt: whether they be

be gifts of the mind, *Phil.* 3. 8. or your deareſt relations in the world, *Luke* 14. 26.

Thirdly, deny your *moral and religious ſelf* for Chriſt, your own righteouſneſs, *Phil.* 3. 10. deny ſinful ſelf *abſolutely*, *Col.* 3. 4, 5. Deny natural ſelf *conditionally* (*i. e.*) be ready to forſake its intereſts at the call of God. Deny your religious ſelf, even your own graces *comparatively*, not in the notion of *duties*, but in the notion of *righteouſneſs*: and to encourage you in this difficult work conſider,

Firſt, what great things Chriſt denied for you, and what ſmall matters you have to deny for him.

Secondly, how readily he denied all for your ſakes, making no objections againſt the difficulteſt commands.

Thirdly, How uncapable you are to put any obligation upon Chriſt to deny himſelf in the leaſt for you, and what ſtrong obligations Chriſt hath put you under to deny your ſelves in your greateſt intereſts upon earth for him.

Fourthly, Remember that your ſelf-denial is a condition conſented to, and ſubſcribed by your ſelves, if ever you received Chriſt aright.

Fifthly, In a word, Conſider how much your ſelf-denial for Chriſt makes for your advantage in both worlds, *Luke* 18. 29. O therefore look not every man upon his own things, but upon the things that are of Chriſt, let not that be juſtly charged upon you which was charged upon them, *Phil.* 2. 21. *All ſeek their own, not the things which are Chriſts.*

Pattern 4.

The *activity* and *diligence* of Chriſt in finiſhing the work of God which was committed to him as a pattern for all believers to imitate. 'Tis ſaid of him, *Acts* 10. 38. *He went about doing good.* O what a great and glorious work did Chriſt finiſh in a little time! a work to be celebrated to all Eternity by the praiſes of the redeemed. Six things were very remarkable in the diligence of Chriſt about his Fathers work.

Firſt, That his heart was intently ſet upon it. *Pſal.* 4. 8. *Thy Law is in the midſt of my heart*, or bowels.

Secondly, That he never fainted under the many great diſcouragements he frequently met withal in that work. *Iſa.* 42. 4. *He ſhall not fail, nor be diſcouraged.*

Thirdly, That the shortness of his time provoked him to the greatest diligence. *John* 9. 4. *I must work the work of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.*

Fourthly, That he improved all opportunities, companies, and occurrences to further the great work which was under his hand. *John* 4. 6, 10.

Fifthly, nothing more displeased him than when he met with dissuasions, and discouragements in his work; upon that account it was that he gave *Peter* so sharp a check, *Mat.* 8. 33. *Get thee behind me Satan.*

Sixthly, Nothing rejoyced his soul more than the prosperity and success of his work. *Luke* 10. 20, 21. When the Disciples made the report of the success of their Ministry, it is said, *in that hour Jesus rejoyced in spirit.* And O what a triumphant shout was that upon the cross at the accomplishment of his work, *John* 19. 30. *It is finished.*

Now Christians, eye your Pattern, look unto Jesus, trifle not away your lives in vanity. Christ was diligent, be not you slothful. And to encourage you in your imitation of Christ in labour, and diligence, consider,

First, How great an honour God puts upon you in employing you for his service: Every vessel of service is a vessel of honour, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. The *Apostle* was very ambitious of that honour, *Rom.* 15. 20. It was the glory of *Eliakim* to be fastned as a nail in a sure place, and to have many people hang upon him, *Isa.* 22. 33.

φιλοτιμούμαι, *ambio, dictum verbum ab amore honoris.* Zanch.

Secondly, Your diligence in the work of God will be your great security in the hour of temptation, for *the Lord is with you, while you are with him,* 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. The *Schoolmen* put the question: How the saints in heaven become impeccable? and resolve it thus, that they are therefore freed from sin, because they are continually employed and swallowed up in the blessed visions of God.

Thirdly, Diligence in the work of God is an excellent help to the improvement of grace. For though gracious habits are not *acquired*, yet they are greatly *improved* by frequent acts. *To him that hath shall be given, Mat.* 25. 29. It is a good note of *Luther, Fides pinguescit operibus,* Faith is made fat by obedience.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Diligence in the work of God is the direct way to the aſſurance of the love of God, 2 *Pet.* 15. 10. This path leads you into heaven upon earth.

Fifthly, Diligence in obedience is a great ſecurity againſt backſliding: Small remiſſions in duty, and little neglects increaſe by degrees unto great Apoſtaſies, you may ſee how that diſeaſe is bred, by the method preſcribed for its cure, *Rev.* 2.5. *Do thy firſt works.*

Sixthly, In a word, laborious diligence in the day of life will be your ſingular comfort when the night of death overtakes you. 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. 2 *Kings* 20. 3.

Pattern 5.

Delight in God and in his ſervice was eminently conſpicuous in the life of Chriſt, and is a rare pattern for believers imitation. *John* 4. 32, 34. *But he ſaid unto them I have meat to eat that ye know not of, my meat is to do the will of him that ſent me and to finiſh his work.* The delights of Chriſt were all in heaven. The Son of man was in heaven in reſpect of delight in God, while he converſed here among men. And if you be Chriſts, heavenly things will be the delight of your ſouls alſo. Now ſpiritual delight is nothing elſe but *the complacency, and well-pleaſedneſs of a renewed heart in converſing with God, and the things of God: reſulting from the agreeableneſs of them to the ſpiritual temper of his mind.* Four things are conſiderable about ſpiritual delights.

Firſt, The *nature* of it, which conſiſteth in the complacency, reſt, and ſatisfaction of the mind in God, and ſpiritual things. The heart of a Chriſtian is centred, it is where it would be; it is gratified in the higheſt in the actings forth of faith and love upon God; as the taſt is gratified with a ſuitable delicious reliſh, *Pſal.* 63. 5, 6. *Pſal.* 119. 14, 24. *Pſal.* 17. 18.

Secondly, The *object* of ſpiritual delight which is God himſelf and the things which relate to him. He is the bleſſed Ocean into which all the ſtreams of ſpiritual delight do pour themſelves, *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and on earth there is none that I deſire in compariſon of thee.*

Thirdly, The *ſubject* of ſpiritual delight, which is a renewed

ed heart, and that only so far as it is renewed, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.*

Fourthly, The *principle* and spring of this delight which is the agreeableness of spiritual things to the temper and frame of a renewed mind. A sensitive pleasure arises from the suitableness of the faculty, and object. So it is here, no delicious sweetness can be so pleasant to the taste, or beautiful colours to the eye, or melodious sounds to the ear, as spiritual things to the renewed souls, because spiritual senses are delicate, and the objects more excellent.

But my business here is not so much to open its nature, as press you to the practice thereof in conformity to your great pattern, whose life was a life of delight in God, and whose work was performed with the greatest delight for God. *I delight to do thy will O my God.* O Christians strive to imitate your pattern in this, and to encourage you, I will briefly hint a few things.

First, Scarce any thing can be more evidential of sincerity than a heart delighting in God, and the will of God. Hypocrites go as far as others in the material part of duties, but here they are defective, they have no delight in God and things spiritual; but do whatsoever they do in Religion from the compulsions of conscience, or accommodations of self ends.

Secondly, An heart delighting in God will be a choice help and means to perseverance. The reason why many so easily part with Religion is, because their souls never tasted the sweetness of it: they never delighted in it, but the Christian who delights in the Law of God, will be meditating day and night, and shall be like a tree planted by a river of water whose leaf fadeth not, *Psal.* 1. 2, 3.

Thirdly, This will represent Religion very beautifully, and takingly to such as are yet strangers to it: you will then be able to invite them to Christ by your example, the language whereof will be like that, *Psal.* 34. 8. *O taste and see that God is good.*

Fourthly, This will make all your services to God very pleasing and acceptable through Christ, you will now begin to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven, your duties are so far *Angelical* as they are performed in the strength of delight in God.

But

But may not a sincere Christian act in duty without delight? yea, may he not feel some kind of weariness in duties? *Obj.*

Yes, doubtless he may, but then we must distinguish betwixt the *Temper* and *Distemper* of a renewed heart, the best hearts are not always in their right frame. *Sol.*

Pattern 6.

The *inoffensiveness* of the life of Christ upon earth is an excellent pattern to all his people: he injured none, offended none, but was holy and harmless, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 7. 26. He denied his own liberty to avoid occasion of offence; as in the case of the Tribute Mony, *Mat.* 19. 27. *The children are free, notwithstanding lest we should offend them go, &c.* So circumspect was Christ, and inoffensive among all men, that though his enemies sought occasion against him, yet could they find none, *Luke* 6. 7. Look unto Jesus, O ye professors of Religion, imitate him in this gracious excellency of his life according to his command, *Phil.* 2. 15. *That ye may be harmless and blameless, the Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.* You are indeed allowed the exercise of your *prudence*, but not a jot farther than will consist with your *innocence*. *Be ye wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.* 'Tis the rule of Christ that you offend none, 1 *Cor.* 10. 32. 2 *Cor.* 6. 3. And to engage you to the imitation of Christ in this I will briefly press it with a few encouragements, which methinks should prevail with any heart that's truly gracious.

First, For the honour of Jesus Christ be you inoffensive, his name is called upon you, his honour is concerned in your deportment: if your carriage in the world give just matter of offence, Christs worthy name will be blasphemed thereby, *James* 2. 7. Your inoffensive carriage is the only means to stop the mouths of detractours, 1 *Pet.* 2. 15.

Secondly, For the sake of souls, the precious immortal souls of others be wary that you give no offence: *wo to the world* saith Christ *because of offences, Mat.* 13. 7. Nothing was more commonly objected against Christ and religion by the

Ecce qui jactant se redemptos à tyrannide Satanæ, qui prædicant se mortuos esse mundo, nihilominus vincuntur cupiditatibus suis. Cyprian.

the heathen in *Cyprians* time, than the loose and scandalous lives of professors: Behold say they, these are the men who boast themselves to be redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, to be dead to the world: nevertheless see how they are overcome by their own lusts. And much after the same rate *Salvian* brings in the wicked of his time, stumbling at the looseness of professors, and saying, Where is that Catholick Law which they believe? where are the examples of piety, and chastity which they have learned, &c. O Christians, draw not the guilt of other mens eternal ruine upon your souls.

Thirdly, In a word, answer the ends of God in your sanctification, and providential disposé in the world this way; by the holiness and harmlessness of your lives, many may be won to Christ. 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. What the heathens said of moral vertue (which they called *verticordia* turn-heart) that if it were but visible to mortal eyes, all men would be enamoured upon it, will be much more true of Religion when you shall represent the beauty of it in your conversations.

Pattern 7.

The *humility* and lowliness of Christ is propounded by himself as a pattern for his peoples imitation. *Mat.* 11. 29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.* He could abase and empty himself of all his glory, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7. He could stoop to the meanest office, even to wash the disciples feet. We read but of one triumph in all the life of Christ upon earth, when he rode to *Jerusalem*, the people strewing branches in the way, and the very children in the streets of *Jerusalem* crying *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*, *Hosanna* in the highest; and yet with what lowliness and humility was it performed by Christ, *Mat.* 21. 5. *Behold thy King cometh unto thee meek and lowly.* The humility of Christ appeared in every thing he spake, or did. Humility discovered it self in his language, *Psal.* 22. 6. *I am a worm and no man.* In his actions, not refusing the meanest office, *Joh.* 13. 14. In his condescensions to the worst of men, upon which ground they called him *a friend of Publicans and sinners*, *Mat.* 11. 19. But especially and above all, in stooping down from all his glory to a state of deepest contempt for the glory of God, and our salvation. Christians, here is your pattern, look to your

your meek and humble Saviour, and tread in his ſteps, be you *clothed with humility*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. Whoever are ambitious to be the worlds *great ones*, let it be enough for you to be Chriſts *little ones*. Convince the world that ſince you knew God, and your ſelves, your pride hath been dying from that day. Shew your humility in your *habits*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3. 1 *Tim.* 2. 9, 10. In your *company*, not contemning the meaneſt and pooreſt that fear the Lord, *Pſal.* 15. 4. *Rom.* 12. 16. In your *language*, that *dialect* befits your lips, *Eph.* 3. 8. *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints*; but eſpecially in the low value, and humble thoughts you have of your ſelves, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. And to preſs this I beſeech you to conſider,

Firſt, From how vile a root pride ſprings. Ignorance of God and of your ſelves gives riſe and being to this ſin: they that know God will be humble, *Iſa.* 6. 5. and they that know themſelves cannot be proud, *Rom.* 7. 9.

Secondly, Conſider the miſchievous effects it produces: it eſtrangeth the ſoul from God, *Pſal.* 138. 6. it provokes God to lay you low, *Job* 40. 11, 12. it goes before deſtruction, and a dreadful fall, *Prov.* 10. 18.

Thirdly, As it is a great *ſin*, ſo it is a bad *ſign*, *Hab.* 2. 4. *Behold his heart which is lifted up, is not upright in him.*

Fourthly, how unſuitable it is to the ſenſe you have, and the complaints you make of your own corruptions, and ſpiritual wants, and above all, how contrary it is to your *pattern*, and example; did Chriſt ſpeak, act, or think as you do? O learn humility from Jeſus Chriſt; it will make you precious in the eyes of God, *Iſa.* 57. 15.

Pattern 8.

The Contentation of Chriſt in a low and mean condition in the world is an excellent pattern for his peoples imitation. His lot in this world fell upon a condition of deepeſt poverty and contempt, yet how well was he ſatisfied and contented with it! hear him expreſſing himſelf about it, *Pſal.* 16. 6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places*; *yea, I have a goodly heritage*. The contentation of his heart with a ſuffering condition evidenced it ſelf in his ſilence under the greateſt ſufferings, *Iſa.* 53. 7. *He was oppreſſed and he was afflicted*; *yet he*

opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. O that in this also the poorest Christians would imitate their Saviour, and learn to manage an afflicted condition with a contented spirit: let there be no murmurs, complaints or foolish charges of God heard from you, whatever straits and troubles he bring you into: For

First, The meanest and most afflicted Christian is owner of many rich invaluable mercies, *Eph.* 1. 3. 1 *Cor.* 3. *ult.* Is sin pardoned and God reconciled? then never open your mouths any more, *Ezek.* 16. 63.

Secondly, You have many precious promises that God will not forsake you in your straits, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Isa.* 41. 17. and your whole life hath been a life of experiences of the faithfulness of God in his promises. Which of you cannot say with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 23. *His mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness.*

Thirdly, How useful, and beneficial are all your afflictions to you! they purge your sins, prevent your temptations, wean you from the world, and turn to your salvation: and how unreasonable then must your discontentedness at them be?

Fourthly, The time of your relief, and full deliverance from all your troubles is at hand: the time is but short that you shall have any concernment about these things, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. If the candle of your earthly comfort be blown out, yet remember it is but a little while to the break of day, and then there will be no need of candles. Besides,

Fifthly, Your lot falls by Divine direction upon you, and as bad as it is, it is much easier and sweeter than the condition of Christ in this world was. Yet he was contented, and why cannot you? O that we could learn contentment from Christ in every condition. And thus I have laid before you some excellent patterns in the life of Christ, for your Imitation.

The

The Thirtieth SERMON.

Sermon 30.

1 JOHN 2. 6.

He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even as he walked. Text.

THeſe words having been reſolved into their parts and the ſenſe opened in the former Sermon; The obſervation was this:

DOCT.

That every man is bound to the imitation of Chriſt, under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Chriſt. Doct.

In proſecution of this point we have already ſhewn what the imitation of Chriſt imports, and what the imitable excellencies in the life of Chriſt are: it now remains that I ſhow you in the next place, why all that profeſs Chriſt, are bound to imitate his example, and then apply the whole. Now the neceſſity of this imitation of Chriſt will convincingly appear diverſe ways.

Firſt, From the eſtabliſhed order of ſalvation which is fixed and unalterable: God that hath appointed the end, hath alſo eſtabliſhed the means and order by which men ſhall attain the ultimate end. Now Conformity to Chriſt is the eſtabliſhed me- 1.

thod in which God will bring souls to glory. *Rom.* 8. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* The same God who hath predestinated men to salvation, hath in order thereunto predestinated them unto Conformity to Christ, and this order of heaven is never to be reversed, we may as well hope to be saved without Christ, as to be saved without Conformity to Christ.

2. Secondly, The nature of Christ mystical requires this Conformity, and renders it indispensably necessary. Otherwise, the body of Christ must be *heterogeneous*; of a nature different from the head: and how monstrous, and uncomely would this be? This would represent Christ to the world in an image, or *Idea*, much like that, *Dan.* 2. 32, 33. *The head of fine gold, the breast and arms of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, the feet part of iron, part of clay.* Christ the head is pure and holy, and therefore very unsuitable to sensual and earthly members. And therefore the Apostle in his description of mystical Christ describes the members of Christ (as they ought to be) of the same nature and quality with the head. 1 *Cor.* 15. 48. *As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have born the image of the earthy, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* That image or resemblance of Christ which shall be compleat and perfect after the Resurrection, must be begun in its first draught here, by the work of regeneration.

3. Thirdly, This resemblance and conformity to Christ appears necessary from the communion which all believers have with Christ in the same Spirit of grace and holiness. Believers are called Christs *fellows* or copartners, *Psal.* 45. 7. from their participation with him of the same spirit, as it is, 1 *Thes.* 4. 8. God giveth the same spirit unto us which he more plentifully poured out upon Christ. Now where the same spirit and principle is, there the same fruits and operations must be produced, according to the proportions and measures of the spirit of grace communicated; and this reason is farther enforced by the very design and end of God in the infusion of the spirit of grace: for it is plain from *Ezek.* 36. 27. that practical holiness, and obedience is the scope, and design of that infusion of the spirit. The very innate property

perty of the ſpirit of God in men is to elevate their minds, and ſet their affections upon heavenly things, to purge their hearts from earthly droſs, and fit them for a life of holineſs and obedience: its nature alſo is aſſimilating and changeth them in whom it is into the ſame image with Jeſus Chriſt their heavenly head, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Fourthly, The neceſſity of this imitation of Chriſt may be argued from the deſign and end of Chriſts exhibition to the world in a body of fleſh. For though we deteſt that doctrine of the *Socinians* which makes the exemplary life of Chriſt to be upon the matter, the whole end of his incarnation: yet we muſt not run ſo far from an error as to loſe a precious truth. We ſay the ſatisfaction of his blood was a main and principal end of his Incarnation, according to *Mat.* 20. 28. We affirm alſo that it was a great deſign and end of the Incarnation of Chriſt to ſet before us a pattern of holineſs for our imitation. For ſo ſpeaks the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21. *He hath left us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps.* And this example of Chriſt greatly obliges believers to his imitation. *Phil.* 2. 5. *Let this mind be in you which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus.* 4.

Fifthly, our imitation of Chriſt is one of thoſe great Articles which every man is to ſubſcribe, whom Chriſt will admit into the number of his diſciples, *Luke* 14. 27. *Whoſoever doth not come after me, cannot be my diſciple.* And again *John* 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me.* To this condition we have ſubmitted if we be ſincere believers, and therefore are ſtrictly bound to the imitation of Chriſt, not only by Gods *command*, but by our own *conſent*. But if we profeſs intereſt in Chriſt, when our hearts never conſented to follow and imitate his example; then are we ſelf-deceiving hypocrites, wholly diſagreeing from the ſcripture character of believers, *Rom.* 8. 1. They that are Chriſts being there deſcribed to be ſuch as walk not after the fleſh but after the ſpirit: and *Gal.* 5. 25. *If we live in the ſpirit, let us walk in the ſpirit.* 5.

Sixthly, The honour of Chriſt neceſſitates the conformity of Chriſtians to his example, elſe what way is there left to ſtop detracting mouths, and vindicate the name of Chriſt from the reproaches of the world? how can wiſdom be juſtified 6.

fied of her children, except it be this way? by what means shall we cut off occasion from such as desire occasion, but by regulating our lives by Christs example? The world hath eyes to see what we *practise*, as well as ears to hear what we *profess*. Therefore either shew the consistency betwixt your profession and practice, or you can never hope to vindicate the name and honour of the Lord Jesus. The uses follow,

For { 1. Information. 2. Exhortation. 3. Consolation.

Use 1. 1. *Use for Information.*

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *If all that profess interest in Christ be strictly bound to imitate his holy example, then it follows that Religion is very unjustly charged by the world with the scandals, and evils of them that profess it.* Nothing can be more unjust, and irrational if we consider

First, That Christian Religion severely censures loose and scandalous actions in all professors: and therefore is not to be censured for them. 'Tis absurd to condemn Religion, for what it self condemns: Looseness no way flowes from the principles of Christianity, but is most opposite, and contrary to it, *Titus* 2. 11, 12. *For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men: teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*

Secondly, It is an argument of the excellency of Christian Religion, that even wicked men themselves covet the name, and profession of it, though they only cloak, and cover their evils under it. I confess it is a great abuse of such an excellent thing as Religion is, but yet if it had not an awful reverence paid it by the consciences of all men, it would never be abused to this purpose by hypocrites, as it is.

Thirdly, According to this reasoning there can be no Religion in the world, for name me that Religion which is not scandalized by the practices of some that profess it. So that this practice

practice hath a natural tendency to *Atheiſm*, and is no doubt incouraged by the Devil for that end.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. *If all mem forfeit their claim to Chriſt who endeavour not to imitate him in the holineſs of his life, then how ſmall a number of real Chriſtians are there in the world?* Indeed if liberal talking without accurate walking, if common profeſſion without holy practices were enough to conſtitute a Chriſtian: then this quarter of the world would abound with Chriſtians. But if Chriſt owns none for ſuch, but thoſe that tread in the ſteps of his example, then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall. The generality of men that live under the Chriſtian name are ſuch as walk after the fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 2. according to the courſe of this world, they yield their members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin, *Rom.* 6. 13. ſtrict godlineſs is a meer bondage to them; narrow is the way, and few there be that walk therein.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *What bleſſed times ſhould we all ſee if true Religion did once generally obtain and prevail in the world!* How would it humble the proud, weaken the paſſionate, and ſpiritualize thoſe that are carnal! The perverſe world charges Religion with all the tumults and diſturbances that are in it, whenas nothing in the world but Religion advanced in the power of it can heal and cure theſe *Epidemical* evils. O if men were once brought under the power of Religion indeed, to walk after Chriſt in holineſs, obedience, meekneſs, and ſelf-denial; no ſuch miſeries as theſe would be heard of among us, *Iſa.* 11. 8, 9. *The ſucking child ſhall play upon the hole of the Aſp, and a weaned child ſhall put his hand on the Cockatrice den, they ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.*

Inference

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *Hence it alſo follows, That real Chriſtians are the ſweeteſt companions.* 'Tis a comfortable thing to walk with them that walk after the example of Chriſt. The holineſs, heavenlineſs, humility, ſelf-denial, and diligence in obedience which was in Chriſt, is in ſome meaſure to be found in all ſincere Chriſtians. They ſhew forth the vertues of him that calleth them. The graces of the ſpirit do more or leſs ſhine forth in them. And Oh how endearing, ſweet and engaging are theſe things? upon this very account the *Apoſtle* invited others into the fellowſhip of the ſaints, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That ye may have fellowſhip with us, and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Chriſt Jeſus*: And is it not ſweet to have fellowſhip with them, who have fellowſhip with Chriſt? O let all your delights be in the Saints, and in the excellent of the earth who excel in vertue, *Pſal.* 16. 3. Yet miſtake not, there is a great deal of difference betwixt one Chriſtian and another, and even the beſt of Chriſtians are ſanctified but in part. If there be ſomething ſweet and engaging, there is alſo ſomething bitter and diſtaſtful in the beſt of men. If there be ſomething to draw forth your delight and love, there is alſo ſomething to exerciſe your pity and patience. Yet this is moſt certain, that notwithſtanding all their infirmities and corruptions, they are the beſt and ſweeteſt company this world affords.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. *In a word, if no mans claim to Chriſt be warranted, but theirs that walk as he walked, How vain and groundleſs then are the hopes and expectations of all unſanctified men who walk after their own luſts?* None are more forward to claim the priviledges of Religion, than thoſe that reject the duties of it: multitudes hope to be ſaved by Chriſt, who yet refuſe to be governed by him. But ſuch hopes have no ſcripture warrant to ſupport them. Yea, they have many ſcripture teſtimonies againſt them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves*

selves with mankind. Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. O how many thousand vain hopes are laid in the dust: and how many thousand souls are sentenced to hell by this one scripture?

2d. *Use for Exhortation.*

If this be so, it naturally presses all the professors of Christianity to strict Godliness in their conversations, as ever they expect benefit by Christ. O professors be ye not conformed unto this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds. Set the example of Christ before you, and labour to tread in his steps. This is the great business of Religion; the main scope of the Gospel: give me leave therefore closely to press it upon your hearts by the following Motives. *Use 2.*

1. *Motive.*

Christ hath conformed himself to you by his abasing incarnation: how reasonable therefore is it that you conform your selves to him in the way of obedience and sanctification? He came as near to you as it was possible for him to do, strive you therefore to come as near to Christ as it is possible for you to do. He hath taken your nature upon him, *Heb.* 2. 14. yea, and with your nature he hath taken your weaknesses and infirmities, *Rom.* 8. 3. and not only your natures, and your infirmities, but your condition also. For he came under the law for your sakes, *Gal.* 4. 4. He conformed himself to you, though he was infinitely above you, that was his abasement; do you conform your selves to him, who are infinitely beneath him, that will be your advancement: his conformity to you emptied him of his glory, your conformity to him will fill you with glory: He conformed himself to you though you had no obligation upon him: will not you conform your selves to him, who lie under infinite obligations so to do? *Motive 1.*

2. *Motive.*

You shall be Conformed to Christ in glory, how reasonable therefore is it you should now conform your selves to him in *Motive 2.*

holineſs? The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *John* 3. 2. *We ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Yea, not only your ſouls ſhall be like him, but your very bodies, even thoſe vile bodies of yours *ſhall be changed, that they may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.* How forcible a Motive is this to bring men into conformity with Chriſt here! eſpecially ſeeing our conformity to him in holineſs, is the evidence of our conformity to him in glory, *Rom.* 6. 5. 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. O profeſſors, as ever you look to be with Chriſt in glory hereafter, ſee that ye walk after Chriſts example in holineſs and obedience here.

3. *Motive.*

Motive 3. The Conformity of your lives to Chriſt your pattern, is your higheſt excellency in this world: the meaſure of your grace is to be eſtimated by this rule. The excellency of every creature riſes higher and higher, according as it approaches ſtill nearer and nearer to its original; the more you reſemble Chriſt in grace, the more illuſtrious and reſplendent will your converſations be in true ſpiritual glory.

4. *Motive.*

Motive 4. So far as you imitate Chriſt in your lives, and no farther, you will be beneficial to the world in which you live. So far as God helps you to follow Chriſt, you will be helpful to bring others to Chriſt, or build them up in Chriſt: for all men are forbidden by the Goſpel to follow you one ſtep farther than you follow Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1. and when you have finiſhed your courſe in this world, the remembrance of your ways will be no further ſweet to others, than they are ways of holineſs and obedience to Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 4. 17. If you walk according to the courſe of this world, the world will not be the better for your walking.

5. *Motive.*

Motive 5. To walk as Chriſt walked is a walk only worthy of a Chriſtian: this is to walk worthy of the Lord, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 12. *Col.* 1. 10. by worthineſs the Apoſtle doth not mean *meritorionſneſs*, but *comelineſs*, or that *decorum* which befits a Chriſtian, as when

when a man walks ſuitably to his place and calling in the world, we ſay he acts like himſelf. So when you walk after Chriſts pattern, you then act like your ſelves, like men of your character and profeſſion. This is conſonant to your *vocation*, Eph. 4. 1. *I beſeech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.* This walking ſuits with your *obligation*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. For it is to live unto him who died for us. This walking only ſuits with your *deſignation*, Eph. 2. 10. *For you are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained we ſhould walk in them.* In a word, ſuch walking as this, and ſuch only, becomes your *expectation*, 2 Pet. 3. 14. *wherefore [beloved] ſeeing that you look for ſuch things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace without ſpot and blameleſs.*

Dignitatis vocabulum in ſcripturis, non ſemper denotat exactam proportionem æqualitatis rei ad rem, ſed quandam convenientiam & decentiam quæ tollit repugnantiam, Davenant. in Col. p. 52.

6. *Motive.*

Motive 6.

How comfortable will the cloſe of your life be at death, if you have walked after Chriſts pattern and example in this world! A comfortable death is ordinarily the cloſe of a holy life, *Pſal.* 37. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.* A looſe careleſs life puts many terrible ſtings into death. As worms in the body are bred of the putrefaction there, ſo the worm of conſcience is bred of the moral putrefaction, or corruption that is in our natures, and converſations. O then be prevailed with by all theſe conſiderations to imitate Chriſt in the whole courſe and compaſs of your converſations.

3*d. Uſe for Conſolation.*

Uſe 3.

Laſtly, I would leave a few words of ſupport and comfort to ſuch as ſincerely ſtudy and endeavour according to the tendency of their new nature, to follow Chriſts example, but being weak in grace, and meeting with ſtrong temptations, are frequently carried beſide the holy purpoſes and deſigns of their honeſt meaning hearts, to the great grief and diſcouragement of their ſouls. They heartily wiſh and aim at holineſs, and ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 5. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes.* They follow after exactneſs in holineſs as *Paul* did, *Phil.* 3. 12. *If by any means they might attain it.* But finding how ſhort they come in all things of the rule and

pattern, they mourn as he did, *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Well, well, if this be thy case, be not discouraged, but hearken to a few words of support and comfort, with which I shall close this point.

1. *Support.*

1. *Support.* Such defects in obedience make no flaw in your Justification. For your Justification is not built upon your obedience, but upon Christs, *Rom.* 3. 24. and how incompleat and defective soever you be in your selves, yet at the same instant, *you are compleat in him which is the head of all principality and power, Col.* 2. 10. Wo to *Abraham, Moses, David, Paul*, and the most eminent Saints that ever lived, if their Justification and acceptation with God had depended upon the perfection and compleatness of their own obedience.

2. *Support.*

2. *Support.* Your deep troubles for the defectiveness of your obedience, doth not argue you to be less, but more sanctified, than those who make no such complaints: for this proves you to be better acquainted with your own hearts, than others are, to have a deeper hatred of sin than others have, and to love God with a more fervent love than others do: the most eminent Saints have made the bitterest complaints upon this accout, *Psal.* 65. 3. *Rom.* 7. 23, 24.

3. *Support.*

3. *Support.* The Lord makes excellent uses even of your infirmities and failings to do you good, and makes them turn to your unexpected advantage: For by these defects he hides pride from your eyes: he beats you off from self-dependance: he makes you to admire the riches of free grace: he makes you to long more ardently for heaven, and entertain the sweeter thoughts of death: and doth not the Lord then make blessed fruits to spring up to you from such a bitter root?

O the

O the blessed Chymistry of heaven, to extract such mercies out of such miseries!

4. Support.

Your bewailed infirmities do not break the bond of the everlasting Covenant. The bond of the Covenant holds firm, notwithstanding your defects and weaknesses, *Jer.* 32.40. *Iniquities prevail against me*, saith *David*, yet in the same breath he adds, *as for our transgressions thou shalt purge them away*, *Psal.* 65. 3. He's still thy God, thy Father for all this. 4. *Support.*

5. Support.

Though the defects of your obedience are grievous to God, yet your deep sorrows for them are well-pleasing in his eyes, *Psal.* 51.17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ephraim* was never a more pleasant child to his father, than when he moaned himself, and smote upon his thigh as thou dost, *Jer.* 31.20. Your sins grieve him, but your sorrows please him. 5. *Support.*

6. Support.

Though God have left many defects to humble you, yet he hath given many things to comfort you. This is a comfort, that the desire of thy soul is to God, and to the remembrance of his name. This is a comfort, that thy sins are not thy delight as once they were; but thy shame and sorrow. This is a comfort, that thy case is not singular; but more or less the same complaints and sorrows are found in all gracious souls through the world; and to say all in one word: This is the comfort above all comforts, that the time is at hand in which all these defects, infirmities and failings shall be done away, 1 *Cor.* 13.10. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* 6. *Support.*

For

For ever blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

And thus I have finished the third general Use of Examination whereby every man is to try his interest in Christ, and discern whether ever Christ hath been effectually applied to his soul. That which remains is a

Use of Lamentation.

Wherein the miserable, and most wretched state of all those to whom Jesus Christ is not effectually applied, will be yet more particularly discovered, and bewailed.

The

The Thirty firſt SERMON.

Serm. 31

EPHES. 5. 14.

Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and riſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light.

Text. Of the ſtate of Spiritual Death, and the miſery thereof.

THis Scripture repreſents unto us the miſerable and lamentable ſtate of the unregenerate, as being under the power of ſpiritual death, which is the cauſe and in-let of all other miſeries. From hence therefore I ſhall make the firſt diſcovery of the woful and wretched ſtate of them that apply not Jeſus Chriſt to their own ſouls.

The ſcope of the *Apoſtle* in this *Context*, is to preſs believers to a circumſpect and holy life; to *walk as children of light*. This exhortation is laid down in *ver.* 8. and preſſed by diverſe arguments in the following verſes.

Firſt, from the tendency of holy principles unto holy fruits and practices, *ver.* 9, 10.

Secondly, from the convincing efficacy of practical godlineſs upon the conſciences of the wicked, *ver.* 11, 12, 13. It awes and convinces their conſciences.

Thirdly, from the co incidence of ſuch a converſation with the great deſign and drift of the ſcriptures: which is to awaken men by regeneration out of that ſpiritual ſleep, or rather death which ſin hath caſt them into: And this is the Argument.

gument of the Text: *Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, &c.* There is ſome difficulty in the reference of theſe words. Some think it refers to *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Awake and ſing ye that dwell in the duſt.* Others to *Iſa.* 60. 1. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, &c.* But moſt probably the words neither refer to this or that particularly, but to the driſt and ſcope of the whole Scriptures, which were inſpired and written upon this great deſign to awaken and quicken ſouls out of the ſtate of ſpiritual death. And in them we are to conſider theſe three things more diſtinctly and particularly.

1. The miſerable ſtate of the unregenerate, they are *aſleep and dead.*
2. Their duty, which is to *awake, and ſtand up from the dead.*
3. The power enabling them thereunto: *Chriſt ſhall give thee light.*

1. Firſt, The miſerable ſtate of the unregenerate, repreſented under the Notions of *ſleep* and *death*: both expreſſions intending one and the ſame thing, though with ſome variety of Notion. The Chriſtleſs and unregenerate world is in a deep ſleep; a ſpirit of ſlumber, ſenſeleſneſs and ſecurity is fallen upon them, though they lie expoſed immediately to eternal wrath and miſery, ready to drop into hell every moment. Juſt as a man that is faſt aſleep in a houſe on fire, and whilſt the conſuming flames are round about him, his fancy is ſporting it ſelf in ſome pleaſant dream, this is a very lively reſemblance of the unregenerate ſoul. But yet he that ſleeps hath the principle of life entire in him though his ſenſes be bound, and the actions of life ſuſpended by ſleep. Leſt therefore we ſhould think it is only ſo with the unregenerate, the expreſſion is deſignedly varied, and thoſe that were ſaid to be *aſleep*, are poſitively affirmed to be *dead*; on purpoſe to inform us that it is not a ſimple *ſuſpenſion* of the acts and exerciſe, but a total *privation* of the principle of ſpiritual life which is the miſery of the unregenerate.

2. Secondly, We have here the duty of the unregenerate which is to *awake out of ſleep, and ariſe from the dead.* This is their great concernment: no duty in the world is of greater neceſſity and importance

importance to them. *Strive* (ſaith Chriſt) *to enter in at the ſtrait gate, Luke* 13. 24. And the order of theſe duties is very natural. Firſt awake, then ariſe. Startling and rouſing convictions make way for ſpiritual life: till God awake us by convictions of our miſery, we will never be perſwaded to ariſe, and move towards Chriſt, for remedy and ſafety.

Thirdly, But you will ſay, if unregenerate men be dead men, to what purpoſe is it to perſwade them to ariſe and ſtand up? The very exhortation ſuppoſes ſome power or ability in the unregenerate; elſe in vain are they commanded to ariſe. This difficulty is ſolved in this very Text, though the duty be ours, yet the power is Gods. God commands that in his word, which only his grace can perform. *Chriſt ſhall give thee light.* Popiſh Commentators would build the power of free will upon this Scripture, by a very weak argument drawn from the order wherein theſe things are here expreſſed: which is but a weak foundation to build upon, for it is very uſual in Scripture to put the effect before, and the cauſe after, as it is here, ſo in *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt.* But I will not here intangle my diſcourſe with that controverſie, that which I aim at is plain in the words, *viz.*

3. *Quamvis verba videntur velle primum excitari, & ſurgere, deinde illuminari: tamen intelligendum eſt, vi lucis Chriſti excitari eum, & ſurgere.* Roll. in Loc.

DOCT.

That all Chriſtleſs ſouls are under the power of Spiritual death, they are in the ſtate of the dead. Doct.

Multitudes of teſtimonies are given in Scripture to this truth, *Eph.* 2. 1, 5. *You hath he quickened who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* Col. 2. 13. *And you being dead in your ſins, and the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickened together with him:* with many other places of the ſame importance. But the method in which I ſhall diſcourſe this point will be this.

Firſt, I will ſhew you in what ſence Chriſtleſs and unregenerate men are ſaid to be dead.

Secondly, what the ſtate of ſpiritual death is.

Thirdly, how it appears that all unregenerate men are in this ſad ſtate. And then apply it.

Firſt, In what ſenſe are Chriſtleſs and unregenerate men ſaid to be dead men. 1.

To open this, we muſt know there is a threefold death, viz.

Death { 1. Natural. 2. Spiritual. 3. Eternal.

Natural death is nothing elſe but the privation of the principle of natural life, or the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, *James* 2. 26. *The body without the ſpirit is dead.* Spiritual death is the privation of the principle of ſpiritual life, or the want and abſence of the quickening ſpirit of God in the ſoul: the ſoul is the life of the body, and Chriſt is the life of the ſoul: the abſence of the ſoul is death to the body, and the abſence or want of Chriſt is death to the ſoul. Eternal death is the ſeparation both of body and ſoul from God, which is the miſery of the damned. Now Chriſtleſs and unregenerate men are not dead in the firſt ſenſe: they are naturally alive, though they are dead while they live: Nor are they yet dead in the laſt ſenſe, eternally ſeparated from God, by an irrevocable ſentence as the damned are: but they are dead in the ſecond ſenſe, they are ſpiritually dead, whilſt they are naturally alive, and this ſpiritual death is the fore-runner of eternal death. Now ſpiritual death is put in ſcripture in oppoſition to a two-fold ſpiritual life.

Viz. { 1. The life of Juſtification. 2. The life of Sanctification.

Spiritual death in oppoſition to the life of Juſtification is nothing elſe but the guilt of ſin, bringing us under the ſentence of death. Spiritual death in oppoſition to the life of ſanctification is the pollution or dominion of ſin. In both theſe ſenſes unregenerate men are dead men but: it is the laſt which I am properly concerned to ſpeak to in this place, and therefore

2. Secondly, Let us briefly conſider what this ſpiritual death is, which as before was hinted is the abſence of the quickening ſpirit of Chriſt from the ſoul of any man. That ſoul is a dead ſoul into which the ſpirit of Chriſt is not infuſed in the work of regeneration, and all its works are dead works, as they

they are called, *Heb.* 9. 14. For look how it is with the damned, they live, they have sense and motion, and an immortality in all these, yet because they are eternally separated from God, the life which they live, deserves not the name of life, but is every where in scripture stiled death: So the unregenerate, they are naturally alive: they eat, and drink, they buy, and sell, they talk, and laugh, they rejoyce in the creatures; and many of them spend their days in pleasures, and then go down to the grave. This is the life they live, but yet the scripture rather calls it death than life, because though they live, yet it is without God in the world, *Eph.* 2. 12. Though they live, yet it is a life alienated from the life of God, *Eph.* 4. 18. And therefore while they remain naturally alive, they are in scripture said *to remain in death*, 1 *John* 3. 14. and to be *dead while they live*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. And there is great reason why a Christless and unregenerate state should be represented in scripture under the notion of death, for there is nothing in nature which more aptly represents that miserable state of the soul than natural death doth. The dead see and discern nothing, and the natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God. The dead have no beauty or desirableness in them, *Bury my dead*, said *Abraham*, *out of my sight*: neither is there any spiritual loveliness in the unregenerate. True it is some of them have sweet natural qualities, and moral excellencies which are taking things; but these are as so many flowers decking and adorning a dead corpse. The dead are Objects of pity, and great lamentation, men use to mourn for the dead, *Eccles.* 12. 5. *Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.* But unregenerate, and Christless souls are much more the Objects of pity and lamentation. How are all the people of God (especially those that are naturally related to them) concerned to mourn over them, and for them as *Abraham* did for *Ishmael*, *Gen.* 17. 18. *O that Ishmael might live before thee.* Upon these, and many other accounts the state of unregeneracy is represented to us in the notion of death.

Thirdly, And that this is the state of all Christless and unsanctified persons will undeniably appear two ways. 3.

1. The causes of spiritual life have not wrought upon them.
2. The effects and signs of spiritual life do not appear in them,

them, and therefore they are in the ſtate, and under the power of ſpiritual death.

Firſt, The cauſes of ſpiritual life have not wrought upon them. There are two cauſes of ſpiritual life.

1. Principal and internal.
2. Subordinate and external.

The principal internal cauſe of ſpiritual life is the regenerating ſpirit of Chriſt, *Rom.* 8. 2. *The law of the ſpirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* 'Tis the ſpirit as a regenerating ſpirit that unites us with Chriſt in whom all ſpiritual life originally is, *John* 5. 25, 26. *Verily I ſay unto you that the hour is coming, and now is when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live; for as the father hath life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the ſon to have life in himſelf.* As all the members of the natural body receive animation, ſenſe, and motion by their Union with their natural head; ſo all believers the members of Chriſt, receive ſpiritual life and animation by their Union with Chriſt their myſtical head, *Eph.* 4. 15, 16. Except we come to him and be united with him in the way of faith, we can have no life in us, *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.* Now the ſpirit of God hath yet exerted no regenerating, quickening influences, nor begotten any ſpecial ſaving faith in natural unſanctified men; whatever he hath done for them in the way of natural, or ſpiritual common gifts, yet he hath not quickened them with the life of Chriſt. And as for the ſubordinate external means of life, *viz.* the preaching of the Goſpel which is the inſtrument of the ſpirit in this glorious work, and is therefore called *the word of life, Phil.* 2. 16. this word hath not yet been made a regenerating quickening word to their ſouls. Poſſibly it hath enlightned them, and convinced them: it hath wrought upon their minds in the way of common illumination, and upon their conſciences in the way of conviction; but not upon their hearts and wills by way of effectual converſion: To this day the Lord hath not given them an heart opening it ſelf in the way of faith to receive Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly,

Secondly, The effects, and ſigns of ſpiritual life do not appear in them: for

Firſt, They have no *feeling* or ſenſe of miſery and danger. I mean no ſuch ſenſe as throwly awakens them to apply Chriſt their remedy. That ſpiritual judgment lies upon them, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not, make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes.*

Secondly, They have no ſpiritual *motions* towards Chriſt, or after things that are ſpiritual, all the Arguments in the world cannot perſwade their wills to move one ſtep towards Chriſt in the way of faith, *John* 5.40. *Ye will not come unto me*; Were there a principle of ſpiritual life in their ſouls, they would move Chriſt-ward, and heaven-ward, *John* 4. 14. it would be in them a well of water ſpringing up into eternal life. The natural tendency of the ſpiritual life is upward.

Thirdly, The unregenerate have no *appetite* unto ſpiritual food, they ſavour not things that are ſpiritual; they can go from week to week, and from year to year, all their life time without any communion betwixt God and their ſouls, and feel no need of it, nor any hungerings, nor thirſtings after it, which could never be if a principle of ſpiritual life were in them, for then they would *eſteem the words of Gods mouth more than their neceſſary food*, Job 30. 12.

Fourthly, They have no *heat*, or ſpiritual *warmth* in their affections to God, and things above, their hearts are as cold as a ſtone to ſpiritual Objects. They are heated indeed by their luſts and affections to the world, and the things of the world; But O how cold and dead are they towards Jeſus Chriſt and ſpiritual excellencies!

Fifthly, They *breathe* not ſpiritually, therefore they live not ſpiritually: were there a ſpiritual principle of life in them, their ſouls would breath after God in ſpiritual prayer, *Acts* 9. 11. *Behold he prayeth.* The lips of the unregenerate may move in prayer, but their hearts and deſires do not breath and pant after God.

Sixthly, They have no cares or fears for *ſelf-preſervation* which is always the effect of life, the pooreſt fly or ſilliest worm will ſhun danger: the wrath of God hangs over them in the threatnings, but they tremble not at it: Hell is but a little

before

before them, they are upon the very precipice of eternal ruine, yet will use no means to avoid it. How plain therefore is this sad case which I have undertaken here to demonstrate, *viz.* that Christless and unregenerate souls are dead souls? The uses follow.

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *If all Christless and unregenerate souls be dead souls, then how little pleasure can Christians take in the society of the unregenerate?*

Certainly 'tis no pleasure for the living to converse among the dead. It was a cruel torment invented by *Mezentius* the Tyrant, to tie a dead and living man together: The pleasure of society arises from the harmony of spirits, and the hopes of mutual enjoyment in the world to come: neither of which can sweeten the society of the godly with the wicked in this world. 'Tis true, there is a necessary civil converse which we must have with the ungodly here, or else (as the Apostle speaks) we must go out of the world. There are also duties of relation which must be faithfully and tenderly paid even to the unregenerate: But certainly where we have our free election, we shall be much wanting both to our duty and comfort if we make not the people of God our chosen companions. Excellently to this purpose speaks a Modern *Author*, 'Art thou a godly master? when thou takest a servant 'into thine house, choose for God, as well as thy self. A godly 'servant is a greater blessing than we think on: he can work 'and set God on work also for his masters good, *Gen.* 24. 12. '*O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good 'speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master*: and sure he 'did his master as much service by his prayer, as by his pru-'dence in that journey. Holy *David* observed while he was 'at *Sauls* Court, the mischief of having wicked and ungodly 'servants, (for with such was that unhappy King so compas-'sed, that *David* compares his Court to the prophane and 'barbarous heathens among whom there was scarce more 'wickedness to be found, *Psal.* 120. 6. *Woe is me that I sojourn 'in Meshech, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar, (i. e.)* among 'those who were as prodigiously wicked as any there) and no 'doubt

ut solent vitia alibi connata in propinqua membra perniciem suam effluere; sic improborum vitia in eos derivantur qui cum illis vitæ habent consuetudinem. Tertul. adverſ. Valentin.

Gurnals Christian armour, *part.* 2. *p.* 256.

'doubt but this made this gracious man in his baniſhment be-
'fore he came to the Crown (having ſeen the evil of a diſor-
'dered houſe) to reſolve what he would do when God
'ſhould make him the head of ſuch a Royal family, *Pſal.* 101.
'7. *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe, he that*
'*telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight.*

'Art thou godly? ſhow thy ſelf ſo in the choice of husband,
'or wife. I am ſure, if ſome, (and thoſe godly alſo) could
'bring no other teſtimonial for their godlineſs than the care
'they have taken in this particular, it might juſtly be called in-
'to queſtion both by themſelves and others. There is no one
'thing that gracious perſons (even thoſe recorded in ſcri-
'pture as well as others) have ſhewn their weakneſs, yea, gi-
'ven offence and ſcandal more in, than in this particular.
'*The ſons of God ſaw that the daughters of men were fair, Gen.*6.2.
'One would have thought the ſons of God ſhould have looked
'for grace in the heart, rather than beauty in the face, but we
'ſee, even they ſometimes turn in at the faireſt ſign,
'without much enquiring what grace is to be found
'dwelling within. Look to the rule O Chriſtian, if thou wilt
keep the power of holineſs. That is clear as a ſun beam
written in the ſcripture, *be not unequally yoked together with un-*
believers, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14.

Inference 2.

How great and wholly ſupernatural, marvellous and wonderful is *Inference* 2.
that change which regeneration makes upon the ſouls of men! It is
a change from death to life, *Luke* 15.24. *This my ſon was dead,*
and is alive again. Regeneration is life from the dead. The
moſt excellent life from the moſt terrible death. 'Tis the
life of God reinſpired into a ſoul alienated from it by the
power of ſin, *Eph.* 4. 18. There are two ſtupendious changes
made upon the ſouls of men, which juſtly challenges higheſt
admiration, *viz.*

That { 1. From ſin to grace.
2. From grace to glory.

The change from grace to glory is acknowledged by all,
and that juſtly, to be a wonderful change; for God to take a

poor

poor creature out of the society of sinful men, yea from under the burden of many sinful infirmities which made him groan from day to day in this world: and in a moment to make him a compleat and perfect soul, shining in the beauties of holiness, and filling him as a vessel of glory with the unspeakable and unconceivable joyes of his presence, to turn his groanings into triumphs, his sighings into songs of praise; This I say is marvellous, and yet the former change from sin to grace is no way inferiour to it. Nay, in some respect beyond it: for the change which glory makes upon the regenerate is but a *gradual* change, but the change which regeneration makes upon the ungodly is a *spiritual* change. Great and admirable is this work of God, and let it for ever be marvellous in our eyes.

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *If unregenerate souls de dead souls, what a fatal stroke doth death give to the bodies of all unregenerate men?* A soul dead in sin, and a body dead by vertue of the curse for sin, and both soul and body remaining for ever under the power of eternal death, is so full and perfect a misery, as that nothing can be added to make it more miserable: 'tis the comfort of a Christian that he can say when death comes *non omnis moriar*, I shall not wholly die; there is a life I live which death cannot touch, *Rom.* 8. 13. *The body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* Blessed and holy is he, that hath part in the first Resurrection, on such the second death hath no power. As death takes a believer from amidst many sorrows and troubles, and brings him to the vision of God, to the general assembly of all the perfected saints, to a state of compleat freedom, and full satisfaction: so it drags the unregenerate from all his sensitive delights and comforts, to the place of torments. It buries the dead soul out of the presence of God for ever. 'Tis the king of terrours, 'tis a serpent with a deadly sting to every man that is out of Christ.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *If every unregenerate soul be a dead soul, how sad is the case of Hypocrites, and temporary believers who are twice dead?* These are those cursed trees of which the *Apostle Jude* speaks, *Jude v.* 12.

Trees

Trees whoſe fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. The Apoſtle alludes unto dying trees. Trees that are dying the firſt time in the ſpring, they then fade, decay, and caſt their leaves, when other trees are fragrant and flouriſhing. But from this firſt death they are ſometimes recovered by pruning and dreſſing, or watering the roots: But if in *Autumn* they decay again, which is the Critical and *Climacterical* time of trees to diſcover whether their diſeaſe be mortal or not: if then they wither and decay the ſecond time, the fault is *ab intra*, the root is rotten, there is no hope of it. The husbandman beſtows no more labour about it, except it be to root it up for fewel to the fire. Juſt thus ſtands the caſe with falſe and hypocritical profeſſours, who though they were ſtill under the power of ſpiritual death, yet in the beginning of their profeſſion they ſeemed to be alive. They ſhewed the world the fragrant leaves of a fair profeſſion: many hopeful buddings of affection towards ſpiritual things were ſeen in them, but wanting a root of regeneration, they quickly began to wither, and caſt their untimely fruit. However, by the help of ordinances, or ſome rouzing and awakening providences they ſeem to recover themſelves again: but all will not do, the fault is *ab intra* from the want of a good root, and therefore at laſt they who were always *once dead*, for want of a principle of regeneration; are now become *twice dead*, by the withering and decay of their vain profeſſion. Such trees are prepared for the ſevereſt flames in hell, *Mat.* 24. 51. Their portion is the ſaddeſt portion allotted for any of the ſons of death. Therefore the *Apoſtle Peter* tells us, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21. *For if after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again intangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them, not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known it to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.* Double meaſures of wrath ſeem to be prepared for them that die this double death.

Inference 5.

If this be ſo, then unregenerate perſons deſerve the greateſt lamentations. And were this truth heartily believed, we could *Inference* 5.

not but mourn over them with the moſt tender compaſſion, and hearty ſorrow. If our husbands, wives or children be dying a natural death, how are our hearts rent in pieces with pity and ſorrow for them? what cries, tears, and wringing of hands diſcover the deep ſenſe we have of their miſery! O Chriſtians, is all the love you have for your relations ſpent upon their bodies? Are their ſouls of no value in your eyes? is ſpiritual death no miſery? Doth it not deſerve a tear? The Lord open our eyes, and duly affect our hearts with ſpiritual death and ſoul miſeries.

Conſider my friends, and let it move your bowels, (if there be bowels of affection in you) whilſt they remain ſpiritually dead they are uſeleſs and wholly unſerviceable unto God in the world as to any ſpecial and acceptable ſervice unto him, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. they are uncapable of all ſpiritual comforts from God: they cannot taſte the leaſt ſweetneſs in Chriſt, in duties, or in promiſes, *Rom.* 8. 6. They have no beauty in their ſouls; how comely ſoever their bodies be, 'tis grace, and nothing but grace that beautifies the inner man, *Ezek.* 16. 6, 7. The dead have neither comfort nor beauty in them. They have no hope to be with God in glory; for the life of glory is begun in grace, *Phil.* 1. 6. Their graves muſt ſhortly be made, to be buried out of the ſight of God for ever in the loweſt hell, the pit digged by juſtice for all that are ſpiritually dead. The dead muſt be buried. Can ſuch conſiderations as theſe draw no pity from your ſouls? nor excite your endeavours for their regeneration? Then 'tis to be feared your ſouls are dead as well as theirs. O pity them, pity them, and pray for them: in this caſe only, prayers for the dead are our duty; who knows but at the laſt God may hear your cries, and you may ſay with comfort as he did, *This my ſon was dead, but is alive; was loſt, but is found; and they began to be merry,* Luke 15. 24.

The

The Thirty ſecond SERMON.

Sermon 32.

JOHN 3. 18.

Text.

——*But he that believeth not is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.*

The Condemnation of unbelievers opened and applied.

CHriſt having diſcourſed *Nicodemus* in the beginning of this Chapter about the neceſſity of regeneration, proceeds to ſhew in this following diſcourſe the reaſon and ground why regeneration and faith are ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, *viz.* Becauſe there is no other way to ſet men free from the curſe and condemnation of the Law. The curſe of the Law like the fiery ſerpents in the wilderneſs, hath ſmitten every ſinner with a deadly ſtroke and ſting, for which there is no cure, but Chriſt lifted up in the Goſpel, *as Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs, ver.* 14. Neither doth Chriſt cure any but thoſe that believingly apply him to their own ſouls. The reſult and concluſion of all you have in my Text, *He that believeth in him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, &c.* In this clauſe which I have pitched upon, we find theſe three parts.

1. The ſin threatned, *viz.* unbelief.
2. The puniſhment inflicted, *viz.* Condemnation.
3. The immediate relation of the one to the other; he is condemned already.

1. Firſt, Let us take into conſideration the ſin which is here threatned, *viz. unbelief.* The neglecting or refuſing of an exalted and offered Jeſus. Unbelief is twofold, *viz.* Negative, or Poſitive. *Negative* unbelief is the ſin of the heathens, who never had the Goſpel among them, nor the offers of Chriſt made to them: theſe cannot believe on him of whom they have not heard. *Poſitive* unbelief is the ſin of men and women under the Goſpel, to whom Chriſt is actually opened and offered by the preaching of the Goſpel, but they make light of it, neglect the great ſalvation; receive not Chriſt into their hearts, nor conſent to the ſevere, and ſelf-denying terms upon which he is offered. This is the ſin threatned.

2. Secondly, The puniſhment inflicted, and that is *condemnation*: a word of deep and dreadful ſignification, appearing in this Text as the hand-writing upon the plaiſter of the wall unto *Belteſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 5. A word whoſe deep ſenſe and Emphaſis is fully underſtood in hell. *Condemnation* is the Judgment or Sentence of God condemning a man to bear the puniſhment of his eternal wrath for ſin, the moſt terrible of all ſentences.

3. Thirdly, The immediate relation, or reſpect this puniſhment hath to that ſin of unbelief. The unbeliever is condemned already (*i. e.*) he is virtually condemned by the law of God: His *mittimus* is already made for hell, he is condemned as a *ſinner*, by the breach of the firſt Covenant; but that condemnation had never been his ruine, except it had been ratified by the ſentence of God, condemning him as an *unbeliever*, for ſlighting and rejecting the grace offered in the ſecond Covenant. So that the unbeliever is already virtually condemned by both, as he is a ſinner, and as he is an unbeliever, as he hath tranſgreſſed the law, and as he hath refuſed the goſpel, as he hath contracted ſin the mortal *diſeaſe*, and refuſed Chriſt the only effectual *remedy*. He is virtually condemned now, and will be ſententially condemned in the Judgment of the great day. Unbelief is his great ſin, and condemnation is his great miſery. Hence the obſervation will be this.

DOCT.

DOCT.

That all unbelievers are preſently and immediately under the juſt and dreadful ſentence of Gods Condemnation. John 12. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him in the laſt day.* John 3. 36. *He that believeth not the Son ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Doct.

Three things are to be opened in the Doctrinal part of this point.

1. What unbelief or the not receiving of Jeſus Chriſt is.
2. What condemnation the puniſhment of this ſin is.
3. Why this puniſhment unavoidably follows that ſin.

First, What the ſin of unbelief or not receiving Chriſt is. By unbelief we are not here to underſtand the reliques or remains of that ſin in the people of God which is mixed with their imperfect faith, for there is ſome unbelief ſtill mingled with faith in the beſt hearts. He that can ſay *Lord I believe*, hath cauſe enough to cry out with tears *help thou my unbelief*. However, this doth not bring the ſoul under condemnation or into the ſtate of wrath. The word condemns this unbelief in them, but doth not condemn their perſons for this unbelief. But the unbelief here ſpoken of is the neglecting or refuſing to take Chriſt upon the terms of the Goſpel, and ſo is excluſive of the ſaving act or effects of faith. 1.

First, It is excluſive of the ſaving act of faith which (as hath been already declared) is the due receiving of Chriſt offered in the Goſpel, conſenting to take him upon his own terms. This the unbeliever will by no means be perſwaded to do. He will be perſwaded to accept the promiſes of Chriſt, but not to accept the perſon of Chriſt: he is willing to accept Chriſt in part, a divided Chriſt, but not to accept Chriſt entirely in all his offices. He will accept the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, in conjunction with his own righteouſneſs, but he will not accept the righteouſneſs of Chriſt as the ſole matter of his Juſtification excluſive of his own righteouſneſs; he is willing to wear the Crown of Chriſt, but cannot

not be perſwaded to bear the croſs of Chriſt. Thus Chriſt and unbelievers part upon terms, God will come down no lower, and the unbeliever will come up no higher. God will not alter his terms, and the unbeliever will not alter his reſolution, and ſo Chriſt is refuſed, Salvation neglected, and in effect the unbeliever chooſeth rather to be damned, than to comply with the ſevere terms of ſelf-denial, mortification, and bearing the croſs of Chriſt. Thus it excludes the ſaving act of faith.

Secondly, It is excluſive of the ſaving fruits and effects of faith. Faith produces love to God, but the unbeliever doth not truly love him. *But I know you* (ſaith Chriſt to unbelievers) *that the love of God is not in you*, *John* 5. 42. Faith purifies the heart of a believer, but the hearts of unbelievers are full of all impurity. The believer overcomes the world, the world overcomes the unbeliever: Faith makes the Croſs of Chriſt ſweet and eaſie to the believer, Unbelief makes Chriſt becauſe of the Croſs bitter and diſtaſtful to the unbeliever. Thus unbelief excludes both the ſaving act and fruits of faith, and conſequently bars the ſoul from the ſaving benefits and priviledges of faith, *viz.* Juſtification, and peace with God.

2. Secondly, Next let us conſider the puniſhment of this ſin which is condemnation. Condemnation in the general is the ſentence of a Judge awarding a mulct, or penalty to be inflicted upon the guilty perſon. There is a twofold Condemnation.

1. *Reſpectu culpæ*, in reſpect of the fault.
2. *Reſpectu pœnæ*, in reſpect of the puniſhment.

Firſt, Condemnation with reſpect to the fault is the caſting of the perſon as guilty of the crime charged upon him. Condemnation with reſpect to the puniſhment is the ſentencing of the convicted offender to undergo ſuch a puniſhment for ſuch a fault, to bear a penal for a moral evil. This *forenſick* word Condemnation is here applied unto the caſe of a guilty ſinner caſt at the bar of God, where the fact is clearly proved, and the puniſhment righteouſly awarded. Thou art an unbeliever, for this ſin thou ſhalt die eternally. Condemnation with reſpect to the fault ſtands oppoſed to Juſtification, *Rom.* 5. 16.

Condem-

Condemnation with reſpect to the puniſhment ſtands oppoſed to Salvation, *Mar.* 16. 16. More particularly,

Firſt, Condemnation is the ſentence of God: the great and terrible God, the omniſcient, omnipotent, ſupream, and impartial Judge, at whoſe bar the guilty ſinner ſtands. 'Tis the Law of God that condemns him now. He hath one that judgeth him, a great and terrible one too. 'Tis a dreadful thing to be condemned at mans bar. But the Courts of humane Judicature, how awful and ſolemn ſoever they are, are but trifles, and childrens play to this Court of heaven and conſcience; wherein the unbeliever is arraigned and condemned.

Secondly, 'Tis the ſentence of God adjudging the unbeliever to eternal death: than which nothing is more terrible. What is a priſon to hell? what is a Scaffold, and an Ax, to *go ye curſed into everlaſting fire*? What is a Gallows and a Halter to everlaſting burnings?

Thirdly, Condemnation is the final ſentence of God, the Supream Judge, from whoſe Bar and Judgment there lies no appeal for the unbeliever, but Execution certainly follows Condemnation, *Luke* 19. 27. If man condemn, God may juſtifie, and ſave: But if God condemn, no man can ſave or deliver. If the law caſt a man as a ſinner, the Goſpel may ſave him as a believer: But if the Goſpel caſt him as an unbeliever, a man that finally rejects Jeſus Chriſt whom it offers to him; all the world cannot ſave that man. O then what a dreadful word is Condemnation! All the evils and miſeries of this life are nothing to it: put all afflictions, calamities, ſufferings, and miſeries of this world into one ſcale, and this ſentence of God into the other, and they will all be lighter than a feather.

Thirdly, In the next place, I ſhall ſhew you that this puniſhment, *viz.* Condemnation, muſt unavoidably follow that ſin of unbelief. So many unbelieving perſons as be in the world, ſo many condemned perſons there are in the world, and this will appear two ways.

1. By conſidering what unbelief excludes a man from.
2. By conſidering what unbelief includes a man under.

Firſt,

Firſt, Let us conſider what unbelief excludes a man from, and it will be found that it excludes him from all that may help and ſave him: for

Firſt, it excludes him from the pardon of ſin. *John* 8. 24. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* Now he that dies under the guilt of all his ſins muſt needs die in a ſtate of wrath and condemnation for ever. *For the wages of ſin is death, Rom.* 6. *ult.* If a man may be ſaved without a pardon, then may the unbeliever hope to be ſaved.

Secondly, Unbelief excludes a man from all the ſaving benefits that come by the ſacrifice or death of Chriſt. For if faith be the only inſtrument that applies and brings home to the ſoul the benefits of the blood of Chriſt, as unqueſtionably it is: then unbelief muſt of neceſſity exclude a man from all thoſe benefits, and conſequently leave him in the ſtate of death and condemnation. Faith is the applying cauſe, the inſtrument by which we receive the ſpecial ſaving benefit of the blood of Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* Eph. 2. 8. *By grace are ye ſaved through faith.* So then if the unbeliever be acquitted and ſaved, it muſt be without the benefit of Chriſts death and ſacrifice, which is utterly impoſſible.

Thirdly, Unbelief excludes a man from the ſaving efficacy and operation of the Goſpel, by ſhutting up the heart againſt it, and croſſing the main drift and ſcope of it, which is to bring up men to the terms of ſalvation: to perſwade them to believe, this is its great deſign, the ſcope of all its commands, 1 *John* 3. 23. *Mark* 1. 14, 15. *John* 12. 36. 'Tis the ſcope of all its promiſes, they are written to encourage men to believe, *Joh.* 6. 35, 37. So then, if the unbeliever eſcape condemnation, it muſt be in a way unknown to us by the Goſpel: Yea, contrary to the eſtabliſhed order therein. For the unbeliever obeyeth not the great command of the Goſpel, 1 *John* 3. 17. Nor is he under any one ſaving promiſe of it, *Gal.* 3. 14, 22.

Fourthly, Unbelief excludes a man from Union with Chriſt: faith being the bond of that Union, *Eph.* 3. 17. The unbeliever therefore may as reaſonably expect to be ſaved without Chriſt, as to be ſaved without faith. Thus you ſee what unbelief excludes a man from.

Secondly,

Secondly, Let us next ſee what guilt and miſery unbelief includes men under, and certainly it will be found to be the greateſt guilt and miſery in the world: For

Firſt, It is a ſin which reflects the greateſt diſhonour upon God. 1 *John* 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witneſs in himſelf. He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; becauſe he believeth not the record which God gave of his Son.*

Secondly, Unbelief makes a man guilty of the vileſt contempt of Chriſt and the whole deſign of Redemption managed by him. All the glorious attributes of God were ſignally manifeſted in the work of Redemption by Chriſt, therefore the Apoſtle calls him *the wiſdom of God, and the power of God,* 1 *Cor.* 1. 23, 24. But what doth the careleſs neglect, and wilful rejection of Chriſt ſpeak, but the weakneſs and folly of that deſign of Redemption by him?

Thirdly, Unbelief includes in it the foreſt ſpiritual judgement that is or can be inflicted in this world upon the ſoul of man: Even ſpiritual blindneſs, and the fatal darkening of the underſtanding by Satan, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. of which, more hereafter.

Fourthly, Unbelief includes a man under the curſe, and ſhuts him up under all the threatnings that are written in the book of God, amongſt which that is an expreſs and terrible one, *Mark* 16. 10. *He that believeth not ſhall be damned.* So that nothing can be more evident than this, that condemnation neceſſarily follows unbelief. This ſin and that puniſhment are faſtned together, with chains of Adamant.

The Uſes follow.

Inference 1.

If this be ſo, then how great a number of perſons are viſibly in the ſtate of condemnation! ſo many unbelievers, ſo many condemned men and women. That's a ſad complaint of the prophet, *Iſa.* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Many there be that talk of faith, and many that profeſs faith: but they only talk of and pro- *Inference* 1.

feſs it: there are but few in the world unto whom the arm of the Lord hath been revealed in the work of faith with power: 'tis put among the great myſteries and wonders of the world, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That Chriſt is believed on in the world. O what a great and terrible day will the day of Chriſts coming to judgement be, when ſo many Millions of unbelievers ſhall be brought to his *Tribunal* to be ſolemnly ſentenced! They are (as my Text ſpeaks) *condemned already*, but then that dreadful ſentence will be ſolemnly pronounced by Jeſus Chriſt, whom they have deſpiſed, and rejected: then ſhall that ſcripture be fulfilled, *Luke* 19. 27. *Theſe mine enemies that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.*

Inference 2.

Inference 2. Hence be informed how great a mercy the leaſt meaſure of ſaving faith is, for the leaſt meaſure of true faith unites the ſoul to Jeſus Chriſt, and then, *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, Rom.* 8. 1. Not one ſentence of God againſt them. So *Acts* 13. 39. *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things.* The weakeſt believer is as free from condemnation as the ſtrongeſt, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt comes upon all believers without any difference. *Rom.* 3. 22. *Even the righteouſneſs of God which is by faith of Chriſt Jeſus unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.* 'Tis not imputed as it is in inherent righteouſneſs: one man hath more holineſs than another. The faith that receives the righteouſneſs of Chriſt may be very different in degrees of ſtrength, but the received righteouſneſs is equal upon all believers: A piece of gold is as much worth in the hand of a child, as it is in the hand of a man. O the exceeding preciouſneſs of ſaving faith!

Inference 3.

Inference 3. How dreadful a ſin is the ſin of unbelief, which brings men under the condemnation of the great God! no ſin ſtartles leſs, or damns ſurer: 'Tis a ſin that doth not affright

fright the conſcience, as ſome other ſins do, but it kills the ſoul more certainly than any of thoſe ſins could do: for indeed other ſins could not damn us, were it not for unbelief, which fixes the guilt of them all upon our perſons. This is the condemnation. Unbelief is the ſin of ſins, and when the ſpirit comes to convince men of ſin, he begins with this as the capital ſin, *John* 16. 9. But more particularly,

Firſt, Eſtimate the evil of unbelief from its Object. It is the ſlighting and refuſing of the moſt excellent and wonderful perſon in heaven or earth. The *fiducial* viſion of Chriſt is the joy of Saints on earth; the *facial* viſion of Chriſt, is the happineſs of Saints in heaven. 'Tis a deſpiſing of him who is altogether lovely in himſelf, who hath loved us and given himſelf for us. 'Tis the rejecting of the only *Mediator* betwixt God and man, after the rejecting of whom there remains no ſacrifice for ſin.

Secondly, Let the evil of unbelief be valued by the offer of Chriſt to our ſouls in the Goſpel: 'tis one part of the great myſtery of godlineſs, that Chriſt ſhould be preached to the Gentiles, 1 *Tim.* 3.16. That the word of this ſalvation ſhould be ſent to us, *Acts* 13. 26. A mercy denied to the fallen angels, and the greateſt part of mankind, which aggravates the evil of this ſin beyond all imagination. So that in refuſing or neglecting Jeſus Chriſt is found vile ingratitude, higheſt contempt of the grace and wiſdom of God, and in the event, the loſs of the only ſeaſon and opportunity of ſalvation, which is never more to be recovered to all eternity.

Inference 4.

If this be the caſe of all unbelievers, it is not to be admired that ſouls under the firſt convictions of their miſerable condition, are plunged into ſuch deep diſtreſſes of Spirit. It's ſaid of them, *Acts* 2. 37. *That they were pricked at the heart and cried out, Men and brethren what ſhall we do?* And ſo the Jayler, *He came in trembling and aſtoniſhed, and ſaid, Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* Certainly if ſouls apprehend themſelves under the condemnation and ſentence of the great God; *Inference* 4.

all their tears and tremblings, their weary days and reſtleſs nights, are not without juſt cauſe and reaſon. Thoſe that never ſaw their own miſerable condition by the light of a clear and full conviction, may wonder to ſee others ſo deeply diſtreſſed in Spirit. They may misjudge the caſe, and call it melancholy or madneſs: but ſpiritual troubles do not exceed the cauſe and ground of them, let them be as deep and great as they will: and indeed it is one of the great myſteries of grace and providence; a thing much unknown to men, how ſuch poor ſouls are ſupported from day to day under ſuch fears and ſorrows as are able in a few hours to break the ſtouteſt Spirit in the world. *Luther* was a man of great natural courage, and yet, when God let in ſpiritual troubles upon his ſoul, it is noted of him, *ut nec vox, nec calor, nec ſanguis ſupereſſet*, He had neither voyce, nor heat, nor blood appearing in him.

Inference 5.

Inference 5. How groundleſs and irrational is the mirth and jollity of all carnal and unregenerate men? they feaſt in their priſon, and dance in their fetters. O the madneſs that is in the hearts of men! If men did but ſee their *mittimus* made for hell, or believe they are condemned already, it were impoſſible for them to live at that rate of vanity they do: and is their condition leſs dangerous becauſe it is not underſtood? Surely no: but much more dangerous for that. O poor ſinners, you have found out an effectual way to prevent your preſent troubles, it were well if you could find out a way to prevent your eternal miſery: but 'tis eaſier for a man to ſtifle conviction, than prevent damnation. Your mirth hath a twofold miſchief in it, it prevents repentance, and encreaſeth your future torment. O what an hell will your hell be, who drop into it out of all the ſenſitive and ſinful pleaſures of this world! If ever a man may ſay of mirth that it is mad, and of laughter what doth it; he may ſay ſo in this caſe.

Inference

Inference 6.

Laſtly, what cauſe have they to rejoyce, admire, and praiſe the Lord to Eternity, who have a well grounded confidence that they are freed from Gods condemnation? *O give thanks to the Father who hath delivered you from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated you into the Kingdom of his dear Son, Col.* 1. 13. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for if you be freed from condemnation, you are out of Satans power, he hath no more any dominion over you. The power of Satan over men comes in by vertue of their condemnation, as the power of the *Jayler* or *Executioner* over the bodies of condemned priſoners doth. *Heb.* 2. 14. If you be freed from condemnation, the ſting of death ſhall never touch you. For the ſting of death ſmites the ſouls of men with a deadly ſtroak only by vertue of Gods condemnatory ſentence. 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56. *The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law.* If you be freed from condemnation now, you ſhall ſtand with comfort and boldneſs at the Judgement Seat of Chriſt in the great day, and verily in this thing is the love of God perfected, 1 *John* 4. 17. O 'tis a priviledge in which the grace, mercy and love of God do ſhine forth as clearly as the ſun when it ſhineth in its full ſtrength. And certainly you will find cauſe to lye at the feet of God aſtoniſhed, and overwhelmed with the ſenſe of this mercy, when you ſhall find your ſelves freed from the condemnation of God, whilſt many others as good as you were, are ſtill under condemnation. Yea, your ſelves freed, and many of your Superiors in the world ſtill under the curſe, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. Yea, your ſelves freed, and others that ſate under the ſame means of grace, and had the ſame external advantages you had, ſtill in chains, 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. O brethren! this is a marvellous deliverance; look on it which way you will, your ranſome is paid and not a peny of it by you: it coſt you nothing to procure your pardon. Your pardon is full, and not one ſin excepted out of it that you ever committed. Your are freed and Jeſus Chriſt condemned in your ſtead to procure your diſcharge,

Inference 6.

diſcharge, your pardon is ſealed in his blood, and is irrevocable for ever, ſo that you ſhall never any more come into condemnation. *He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation, but is paſſed from death to life, John* 5. 24.

Let them that are ſo delivered ſpend their days on earth in praiſe and cheerful obedience, and when they die, let them not ſhrink away from death, nor be afraid to take it by the cold hand, it can do them no harm. Yea, let them cloſe their dying lips with

Thanks be to God for Jeſus Chriſt.

The

The Thirty third SERMON.

Sermon 33.

JOHN 3. 19.

Text.

And this is the Condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light; because their deeds were evil.

Of the Aggravation of the sin and punishment of unbelief under the light of the Gospel.

OUt of the fore-going Verse it was fully proved in our last Sermon that all Christless and unregenerate men are no better than dead men, being *Condemned already*. Our Saviour proceeds in this Verse to aggravate the misery of those that refuse and despise him, yet farther, and to let them know that those who remain in unbelief and the state of unregeneracy must expect some greater and sorer wrath than other men: not only a simple Condemnation, but an aggravated and peculiar Condemnation. *This is the Condemnation that light is come, &c.*

In the words we find these three parts.

1. The aggravation of sin, by the abuse of Gospel light. *Light is come, &c.*
2. The aggravation of misery in proportion to that abuse of light, *this is the condemnation.*
3. The cause and occasion drawing men into this sin and misery, *because their deeds were evil.*

First,

1. First, We have here the aggravation of sin by the abuse of Gospel Light, *Light is come*. By Light we are to understand the knowledge, discovery and manifestation of Christ, and Redemption by him in the Gospel. He is the Son of righteousness that arises in the Gospel upon the nations, *Mal.* 4. 1. When he came in the flesh, then did *the day-spring from on high visit us*, *Luke* 1. 78. And the light may be said to come two ways, either

First, In the means by which it is conveyed to us, or Secondly, in the efficacy of it upon our minds, when it actually shines into our souls. Light may come among a people in the means, and yet they actually remain in darkness all the while. As it is in nature, The sun may be up and a very glorious morning far advanced, whilst many thousands are drouzing upon their beds with their curtains drawn about them. Light in the *means*, we may call *potential Light*. Light in the *mind* we may call *actual light*. It is but seldom that light comes in the means, and continues long among men, but some light must needs actually shine into their souls also: but this actual light is twofold,

1. Common and intellectual only to *conviction*, or
2. Special and efficacious light, bringing the soul to Christ, by real *conversion*.

call'd in 1 *Cor.* 4. 6. ——Gods *shining into the heart*. Where ever light comes in this last sense, it is impossible that such men should prefer darkness before it; but it may come in the means, yea, it may actually shine into the consciences of men by those means and convince them of their sins, and yet men may hate it, and choose darkness rather than light. And this is the sense of this place, Light was come in the Gospel dispensation among them, yea, it hath shined into many of their consciences, gauled, and reproved them for sin, but they hated it, and had rather be without such a troublesome inmate. In a word, by the coming of light, we are here to understand a more clear and open manifestation of Christ by the Gospel than ever was made to the world before: for we are not to think that there was

no

no light in the world till Chriſt came, and the Goſpel was publiſhed in the world by the Apoſtles miniſtry. For *Abraham* ſaw Chriſt's day, *John* 8. 56. and all the faithful before Chriſt ſaw the promiſes (*i. e.*) their accompliſhment in Chriſt afar off, *Heb.* 11. 13. for it was with Chriſt the Son of righteouſneſs as it is with the natural Sun, which illuminates the *hemiſphere* before it actually riſes, or ſhews its body above the *Horizon*: but when it riſes and ſhews it ſelf, the light is much clearer; ſo it was in this caſe. The greater therefore was their ſin, that rebelled againſt it, and preferred darkneſs to light: this was their ſin, with its fearful aggravation.

Sol nondum conſpectus illuminat orbem.

Secondly, In a moſt juſt proportion to this ſin we have here the aggravated condemnation of them who ſinned againſt ſuch clear Goſpel-light: *This is the condemnation*, this is the judgement of all judgements, the greateſt and moſt intolerable judgement: a ſeverer ſentence of condemnation than ever did paſs againſt any others that ſinned in the times of ignorance and darkneſs: they that live and dye impenitent and unregenerate how few ſoever the means of ſalvation have been which they have enjoyed, muſt be condemned: yea, the *Pagan* world who have no more but natural light to help them, will be condemned by that light: but *this is the condemnation* (*i. e.*) ſuch ſinning as this is the cauſe of the greateſt condemnation, and foreſt puniſhment, as it's called, *Heb.* 10. 19. 2.

Thirdly, The cauſe and occaſion drawing men into this ſin and miſery: *becauſe their deeds were evil*, (*i. e.*) the convincing light of truth put a great deal of vigour and activity into their Conſciences which they could not endure. The accuſations and condemnations of Conſcience are very irkſome and troubleſome things to men: to avoid this they were willing to be ignorant. An enlightned Conſcience gives an interruption alſo unto men in their ſinful courſes and pleaſures: they cannot ſin at ſo eaſie a rate in the light as they did in darkneſs; and this made them hate the light as a very troubleſom thing to them. Thus you ſee what was the ſin, and what the puniſhment, and what the cauſe of both. 3.

Hence the observation is,

DOCT.

Doct. *That the greater and clearer the light is, under which the impenitent and unregenerate do live in this world; by so much greater and heavier will their condemnation and misery be in the world to come.*

Mat. 11. 21, 22. *Wo unto thee Chorazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes: but I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgement than for you.* Two things require explication, in the doctrinal part of this point.

viz.
1. How light puts a deeper guilt and aggravation into sin.
2. Why sin so aggravated makes men liable to greater condemnation.

1. First, We will enquire into the grounds and reasons why greater and clearer light greatens and aggravates proportionably the sins that are committed under it: and it will appear that it doth so upon divers accounts.

First, All light (especially Evangelical-light) is a great preservative from sin; and an excellent means to prevent it: 'tis the property of light to inform the judgement and rectifie the mistakes and errors of it, and thereby to give check to the affections in the pursuit of sinful designs and courses: 'tis a plain case, that many men would never do as they do if their understandings were better informed, 1 Cor. 2. 8. *Which none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory:* It was want of light and better information which drew them under that horrid and unparallel'd guilt. Our Saviour also supposes in the place before cited: that if *Tyre* and *Sidon* had enjoyed the same light and means of grace that *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* did; they would never have been so sinful as they were: light

light diſcovers danger, and thereby overaws and ſtops men from proceeding farther in thoſe paths and courſes that will run them into it.

Secondly, ſinning under and againſt the light, ſuppoſes and involves in it a greater contempt and deſpight of Gods authority than ſinning in ignorance and darkneſs doth: every man that breaks the law of God doth not in the ſame degree deſpiſe and ſlight the authority of the Law-maker: but when a man hath light to diſcover the evil and danger of what he doth, and yet will dare to do it; what is this but the treading of Gods authority under foot? the caſting of his word behind our backs? Wilfull ſinning is a deſpightful ſinning againſt God, *Heb.* 10. 26. it argues a low and vile eſteem of the law of God which is reverent and holy: and by ſo much the more it maketh ſin to be exceeding ſinful.

Thirdly, Sinning under, and againſt the light admits not of thoſe excuſes and pleas to extenuate the offence, which ſins of pure ignorance do. Thoſe that live without the ſound of the Goſpel may ſay, Lord, we never heard of Chriſt and the great redemption wrought by him: if we had, we would never have lived and acted as we did: and therefore Chriſt ſaith, Joh. 15. 22. *If I had not come and ſpoken unto them they had not had ſin, but now they have no cloak for their ſin.*

The meaning is, that if the Goſpel-light had not ſhined among them, their ſin had not been of that deep guilt that now it is: for now it is ſo foul and heinous by reaſon of the light under, and againſt which it is committed, that they have no pretence or excuſe to extenuate or mitigate it.

Fourthly, Evangelical light is a very rich favour and mercy of God to men: one of the choiceſt gifts beſtowed upon the Nations of the world; and therefore it's ſaid, Pſal. 147. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgements unto Iſrael: he hath not dealt ſo with any nation, and as for his judgements they have not known them* Other Nations have Corn and Wine, Gold and Silver, abundance of earthly delights and pleaſures: but they have not a beam of heavenly light ſhining upon them. We may account this mercy ſmall, but God who is beſt able to value the worth of it, accounts it great, Hoſ. 8. 12. *I have written unto them the great things of my Law.* Chriſt reckoned *Capernaum* to be ex-

alted unto Heaven by the Ministry of the Gospel in that place. Now the greater the mercy is which the light of truth brings with it, by so much the more horrid and heinous must the abusing and despising of it be.

Fifthly, Sinning against the light argues a love to sin as sin: to naked sin without any disguise or covert. It is nothing so bad for a man to sin through a mistake of judgement; when he thinks that to be lawful which is indeed sinful; he doth not now close with sin as sin: but he either closes with it as his duty, or at least his liberty. 'Tis hard for Satan to perswade many men to embrace a naked sin, and therefore he cloaths it in the habit of a duty or liberty, and thereby deceives and draws men to the commission of it. But if a man have light shining into his Conscience, and convincing him that the way he is in is the way of sin quite contrary to the revealed will of God; stripping the sin naked before the eye of his Conscience, so that he hath no covert or excuse, and yet will persist in it: this, I say, argues a soul to be in love with sin as sin. Now as for a man to love grace as grace, is a solid argument to prove the truth of his grace; so on the contrary, for a man to love sin as sin, doth not only argue him to be in the state of sin, but to be in the forefront, and among the highest rank of sinners.

Sixthly, The greater and clearer the light is, under and against which men continue in sin, the more must the Consciences of such sinners be supposed to be wasted and violated by such a way of sinning: for this is a sure rule, that the greatest violation of Conscience is the greatest sin. Confcience is a noble and tender part of the soul of man, it is in the soul as the eye in the body, very sensible of the least injury, and a wound in the Conscience is like a blow in the eye: but nothing gives a greater blow to Conscience, nothing so much wastes it and destroys it as sins against the light do: this puts a plain force upon the Conscience, and gives a dreadful stab to that noble power: Gods vicegerent in the soul. And thus you see the first thing made good, that light puts deep guilt and aggravation into sin.

Maxima violatio conscientiæ est maximum peccatum.

2. Secondly, In the next place let us examine why sin so aggravated by the light, makes men liable to the greater condemnation: for that it doth so is beyond all debate or question,

on, elſe the *Apoſtle Peter* would not have ſaid of thoſe ſinners againſt light as he doth, 2 Pet. 2. 21. *That it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs:* nor would Chriſt have told the Inhabitants of *Chorazin* or *Bethſaida*, that it ſhould be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of Judgement than for them. There is a twofold reaſon of this.

1. *Ex parte Dei*, on Gods part.
2. *Ex parte Peccatoris*, on the Sinners part.

Firſt, *Ex parte Dei*, on Gods part, who is the righteous Judge of the whole earth, and will therefore render unto every man according as his works ſhall be: for ſhall not the Judge of the whole earth do right? he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, and righteouſneſs requires that difference be made in the puniſhment of Sinners according to the different degrees of their ſins. Now that there are different degrees of ſin is abundantly clear from what we have lately diſcourſed under the former head: where we have ſhewed that the light under which men ſin, puts extraordinary aggravations upon their ſins: anſwerable whereunto will the degrees of puniſhment be awarded by the righteous Judge of Heaven and earth. The *Gentiles* who had no other light but that dim light of nature, will be condemned for diſobeying the law of God written upon their hearts: but yet greater wrath is reſerved for them who ſin both againſt the light of nature, and the light of the Goſpel alſo: and therefore it is ſaid, Rom. 2. 9. *Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the Jew firſt, and alſo of the Gentile.* Impenitent Jews and Gentiles will all be condemned at the Bar of God: but with this difference, to the Jew firſt, (*i.e.*) principally and eſpecially becauſe the light and mercy which he abuſed and violated were far greater than thoſe beſtowed upon the Gentiles, *becauſe unto them were committed the Oracles of God*; and God had not dealt with any Nation as with that Nation. Indeed in the rewards of obedience the ſame reaſon doth not hold: he that came into the Vineyard at the laſt hour of the day may be equal in reward with him that bare the heat and burthen of the whole day,

day, because the reward is of grace and bounty, not of debt and merit: but it is not so here, justice observes an exact proportion in distributing punishments according to the degrees, deserts and measures of sin; and therefore it is said concerning *Babylon*, Rev. 18. 7. *How much she had glorified her self and lived deliciously; so much torment and sorrow give her.*

Secondly, *Ex parte Peccatoris*, upon the account of sinners it must needs be, that the heaviest wrath and most intolerable torments should be the portion of them who have sinned under and against the clearest light and means of grace: for we find in the Scripture account, that a principal and special part of the torment of the damned will arise from their own Consciences, Mark 9. 44. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched:* and nothing is more manifest than this, that if Conscience be the tormentor of the damned, then sinners against light must needs have the greatest torments. For,

First, The more knowledge any man had in this world, the more was his Conscience violated and abused here, by sinning against it: and O what work will these violations and abuses make for a tormenting Conscience in Hell! With what rage and fury will it then avenge it self upon the most stout, daring and impudent sinner! the more guilt now, the more rage and fury then.

Secondly, The more knowledge or means of knowledge any man hath enjoyed in this world, so much the more matter is prepared and laid up for Conscience to *upbraid* us with in the place of torments: and the upbraidings of Conscience are a special part of the torments of the damned. O what a peal will Conscience ring in the ears of such sinners! Did not I warn thee of the issue of such sins, undone wretch? How often did I strive with thee, if it had been possible to take thee off from thy course of sinning, and to escape this wrath? Did not I often cry out in thy bosom, stop thy course sinner? Hearken to my counsel, turn and live; but thou wouldst not hearken to my voice. I forewarned thee of this danger but thou slightedst all my warnings: thy lusts were too strong for my light: and now thou seest whither thy way tended, but alas too late!

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The more knowledge or means of knowledge any man hath abuſed and neglected in this world, ſo many fair opportunities and great advantages he hath loſt for Heaven: and the more opportunities and advantages he hath had for Heaven, the more intolerable will Hell be to that man: as the mercy was great which was offered by them, ſo the torment will be unſpeakable that will ariſe from the loſs of them. Sinners, you have now a wide and open door, many bleſſed opportunities of ſalvation under the Goſpel, it hath put you in a fair way for everlaſting happineſs: many of you are not far from the kingdom of God: there will be time enough in Hell to reflect upon this loſs. What think you, will it not be ſad to think there, O how fair was I once for Heaven! to have been with God and among yonder Saints! My Conſcience was once convinced, and my affections melted under the Goſpel. I was almoſt perſwaded to be a Chriſtian indeed: the bargain was almoſt made betwixt Chriſt and my ſoul: there were but a few points in difference betwixt us: but wretch that I was, at thoſe points the bargain ſtuck, and there the treaty ended to my eternal ruine: I could not deny my luſts: I could not live under the ſtrict yoak of Chriſts government: but now I muſt live under the inſupportable wrath of the righteous and terrible God for ever: and this torment will be peculiar to ſuch as periſh under the Goſpel. The Heathen who enjoyed no ſuch means, can therefore have no ſuch reflections, nay, the very Devils themſelves who never had ſuch a plank after their ſhipwrack, I mean a Mediator in their nature, or ſuch terms of reconciliation offered them, will not reflect upon their loſt opportunities of recovering as ſuch ſinners muſt, and will: this therefore *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; but men loved darkneſs rather than light.*

Inference 1.

Hence it follows, that neither knowledge, nor the beſt means of knowledge are in themſelves ſufficient to ſecure men from wrath to come. Light in it ſelf is a choice mercy, and therefore the means that begat and encreaſed it muſt be ſo too: but yet it is a mercy liable to the greateſt abuſe, and the abuſe of. *Inference* 1.

of the best mercies brings forth the greatest miseries. Alas, Christians, your duty is but half learnt when you know it: obedience to light makes light a blessing indeed, Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them.* Happiness is not entailed upon simple knowing, but upon doing; upon obedience to our knowledge: otherwise he that increaseth knowledge doth but increase sorrow; *for that servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himself, nor did according to his will; shall be beaten with many stripes,* Luke 13. 47. *And to him that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin,* Jam. 4. 17. We are bound with all thankfulness to acknowledge the bounty of Heaven to this sinful generation in furnishing us with so many excellent means of light beyond many other nations and generations that are past: but yet we ought to rejoice with trembling when we consider the abuses of light in this wanton age, and what a dismal event is like to happen unto many thousands among us. I fear the time is coming when many among us will wish they had never set foot upon English ground. God hath blessed this nation with many famous, burning and shining lights; it was once said to the honour of this Nation, *that the English Ministry was the worlds wonder:* and when a man of another Nation began to Preach methodically and convincingly, they were once wont to say, *we perceive this man hath been in England*: the greater will our account be for abusing such light and rebelling against it: the clearer our light is now, the thicker will the mists of darkness be hereafter; if we thus wantonize under it, and rebel against it. The Devils have more light than we, and therefore the more torment: of them it is said, Jam. 2. 19. *The Devils also believe and tremble*: the horror of their Consciences is answerable to their illumination, *they tremble*, the word signifies the rote of the Sea, or such a murmuring dreadful noise, as the tempestuous Seas use to make when they break themselves against the Rocks.

Clerus Anglicanus stupor mundi.

Perzipimus hunc hominem fuisse in Anglia.

Φρίσσουσι, ἐστὶ δὲ μυκᾶται ἀπειλητίκῶς. Eustach.

Inference 2.

Inference 2. *If the abuse of light thus aggravates sin and misery, then times of great temptation are like to be times of deep guilt.* Wo to an inlightned knowing generation when strong temptations befall

fall them. How do many in ſuch times impriſon the known truth to keep themſelves out of Priſon! offer violence to their own Conſciences, to avoid violence from other hands! * *Plato* was convinced of the unity of God, but durſt not own his own convictions: but ſaid it was a truth neither eaſie to find nor ſafe to own. And even † *Seneca*, the renowned moraliſt, was forced by temptation to diſſemble his conviction, of whom * *Auguſtin* ſaith he worſhipped what himſelf reprehended; and did what himſelf reproved: and even a great *Papiſt* of later times was heard to ſay as he was going to Maſs, *eamus ad communem errorem*, let us go to the common error. O how hard is it to keep Conſcience pure and peaceable in days of temptation! doubtleſs it is a mercy to many weak and timerous Chriſtians to be removed by a ſeaſonable death out of harms way, to be disbanded by a merciful providence before the heat of the battle. *Chriſt* and *Antichriſt* ſeem at this day to be drawing into the field, a fiery tryal threatens the profeſſors of this age: but when it comes to a cloſe grapple indeed, we may juſtly tremble to think how many thouſands will break their way through the convictions of their own Conſciences to ſave their fleſh. Believe it ſirs, if Chriſt hold you to himſelf by no other tye than the ſlender thread of a ſingle conviction, if he have not intereſt in your hearts and affections, as well as in your underſtandings and Conſciences: if you be men of great light and ſtrong unmortified luſts: if you profeſs Chriſt with your tongues, and worſhip the world with your hearts: a man may ſay of you without the gift of prophecie what the Prophet ſaid of *Hazael*; I know what ye will do in the day of temptation.

* *Opificem univerſorum neque invenire facile, neque inventum in vulgus promulgare tutum.*

† *In animi religione non habeat, ſed in actibus fingat.*

* *Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat, adorabat.*

Inference 3.

Inference 3.

If this be ſo, what a ſtrong engagement lieth upon all enlightned perſons to turn heartily to God; and reduce their knowledge into practice and obedience. The more men know, the more violence they do to their own Conſciences in rebelling againſt the light; this is to ſin with an high hand, *Num.* 15. 30. Believe it ſirs, you cannot ſin at ſo cheap a rate as others do: knowledge in a wicked man, like high mettle in a blind

Horse, doth but the sooner precipitate him into ruine. You may know much more than others, but if ever you come to Heaven, it must be in the same way of faith and obedience, mortification and self-denial in which the weakest Christian comes thither: whatever knowledge you have, to be sure you have no wisdom, if you expect salvation upon any other or easier terms, than the most illiterate Christian finds it. It was a sad observation of the Father, *surgunt indocti & rapiunt cœlum*: the unlearned rise and take Heaven. What a pity 'tis that men of such excellent parts should be enslaved to their lusts! that ever it should be said, *sapientes sapienter descendunt in Gehennam*: their learning doth but hang in their light, it doth but blind them in spiritual things, and prepareth them for the greater misery.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *Hence it also follows, that the work of conversion is a very difficult work: the soul is scarcely half won to Christ, when Satan is cast out of the understanding by illumination.* The Devil hath deeply intrenched himself, and strongly fortified every faculty of the soul against Christ. The understanding indeed is the first entrance into the soul, and out of that faculty he is oftentimes expulsed by light and conviction, which seems to make a great change upon a man. Now he becomes a professor; now he takes up the duties of Religion, and passes up and down the world for a convert: but alas, alas, all the while Satan keeps the Fort-royal, the heart and will in his own possession: and this is a work of more difficulty. The weapons of that warfare must indeed be mighty through God, which do not only cast down imaginations, but bring every thought of the heart into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4,5. While the heart stands out, though the understanding be taken in, the soul remains in Satans possession: 'tis a greater work (and we daily find it so) to win one heart, than to convince twenty understandings.

Inference

Inference 5.

Hence alſo we may learn what ſtrength and power there is in the luſts of mens hearts, which are able to bear down ſo ſtrong convictions of the Conſcience before them: that's a great truth, though a very ſad one, Eccleſ. 8. 11. *The heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil.* O how common is it every day, and in every place to ſee men hazarding their ſouls to ſatisfie their luſts! every man, ſaith the Prophet, *turneth to his courſe as the Horſe ruſheth into the battel*: The Horſe is a very fierce and warlike creature, and when his courage is rouzed by the ſound of Trumpets and ſhouts of Armies, he breaks headlong into the ranks of armed men, though death be before him. Such boiſterous and headlong luſts are found in many enlightned perſons: though their Conſciences repreſent damnation before them, onward they will ruſh, though God be loſt, and a precious ſoul undone for ever. *Inference* 5.

Inference 6.

To Conclude, *As ever you will avoid the deepeſt guilt, and eſcape the heavieſt condemnation, open your hearts to obey and practiſe whatſoever God hath opened your underſtandings and Conſciences to receive of his revealed will*: obey the light of the Goſpel while you have opportunity to enjoy it: this was the great counſel given by Chriſt, John 12. 35, 36. *Yet a little while the light is with you, walk whilſt you have the light, leſt darkneſs come upon you.* The manifeſtation of Chriſt in the Goſpel is the light of the world: all the nations of the earth that want this light are benighted: and thoſe upon whom this light is riſen have but a ſhort time under it; *yet a little while the light is with you*, and whatever patience God may exerciſe towards poor ignorant ſouls, yet commonly he makes ſhort work with the deſpiſers of this light: the light of the Goſpel is a ſhining Lamp, fed with Golden-oyl. God will not be at the expence of ſuch light for them that do but trifle with it. The night is coming when no man can work: There are many ſad ſigns upon us of a ſetting Sun: a night of darkneſs approaching: many burning and ſhining lights *Inference* 6.

are extinguished, and many put under a Bushel: your work is great; your time short; this is the only space you have for repentance, *Rev.* 2. 21. If this opportunity of salvation be lost, it will never come again, *Ezeck.* 24. 13. How pathetical was that lamentation which Christ made over *Jerusalem*, Luke 19. 41, 42. *And when he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it; saying If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* Christ is threatning these nations with the removal of his Gospel-presence: he hath found but cold entertainment among us. *England* hath been unkind to Christ: many thousands there are that rebel against the light; *that say unto God Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* Christ will not tarry where he is not welcome; who would, that hath any whither else to go? Obey the light therefore, lest God put it out in obscure darkness.

The

The Thirty fourth SERMON.

Sermon 34.

2 COR. 4. 3, 4. Text.

But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.

The blinding policies of Satan opened as the cauſe of unbelief, and forerunner of deſtruction.

THE averſations of men from Jeſus Chriſt their only remedy, is as much to be admired, as lamented: one would think the news of deliverance ſhould make the hearts of *captives* leap for joy: the tydings of a Saviour ſhould tranſport the heart of a loſt ſinner. A man would think a little *Rhetorick* might ſuffice to perſwade the naked ſoul of a ſinner to put on the rich robes of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which coſt him nothing but acceptance: or the periſhing ſtarving ſinner to accept the bread of God which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world. This is the great deſign I have managed in this whole diſcourſe; the centre to which all theſe lines are drawn: many arguments have been uſed; and many ways attempted to prevail with men to *apply* and put on Chriſt,

Chriſt, and I am afraid all too little. I have but laboured in vain, and ſpent my ſtrength for nought; all theſe diſcourſes are but the beating of the air, and few if any will be perſwaded to come unto Chriſt, who is clearly opened, and freely offered in the Goſpel to them. For alas, whilſt I am *reaſoning*, Satan is *blinding* their minds with falſe reaſonings and contrary perſwaſions: the God of this world turns away the ears, and draws away the hearts of almoſt the whole world from Chriſt: *the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Satan is a great and jealous Prince; and is well aware that ſo many of his ſubjects as ſhall be brought to ſee the miſery of their condition, will never endure to abide any longer in ſubjection to him: 'tis therefore his great policy to put out their eyes, that he may ſecure their ſouls; to darken their underſtandings, that he may keep his intereſt firm and intire in their wills and affections: and this makes *the effectual application of Chriſt* ſo great a difficulty: that upon the contrary, it is juſt matter of admiration that any ſoul is perſwaded and prevailed with to quit the ſervice of Satan, and come to Chriſt. And therefore in the laſt place, to diſcover the great difficulty of converſion, and ſhew you where it is that all our endeavours ſtick and ſet, ſo that we can move the deſign no farther, with all our tugging and ſtriving, reaſoning and perſwading; as alſo to mourn over and bewail the miſery of Chriſtleſs and unregenerate ſouls, with whom we muſt part upon the ſaddeſt terms; I have choſen this Scripture, which is of a moſt awakening nature; if haply the Lord at laſt may perſwade any ſoul to come over to Chriſt thereby.

Theſe words come into the *Apoſtles* diſcourſe, by way of *prolepſis*: he had been ſpeaking in the former *Chapter* of the tranſcendent excellency of the Goſpel above the Law: and among other reſpects he prefers it to the Law in point of clearneſs. The Law was an obſcure and cloudy diſpenſation, there was a veil upon the face of *Moſes*, and the hearts of the people, that they could not ſee to the end of that which is aboliſhed: but under the Goſpel we all with open face behold as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord.

Againſt

Againſt this diſcourſe the *Apoſtle* foreſaw and obviated this objection. If your Goſpel be ſo clear, what is the reaſon that many who live under the miniſtration of it (and they none of the meaneſt neither, for wiſdom and underſtanding) do yet ſee no glory nor excellency in it? To this he returns in the words I have read; *if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, whoſe eyes the god of this world hath blinded*, &c. *q. d.* 'Tis true, multitudes there are who ſee no glory in Chriſt or the goſpel, but the fault is not in either; but in the minds of them that believe not. The Sun ſhines forth in its glory, but the blind ſee no glory in it: the fault is not in the Sun but in the eye. In the words themſelves we have three parts to conſider.

1. A dreadful Spiritual Judgement inflicted.
2. The wicked inſtrument by whom it is inflicted.
3. The politick manner in which he doth it.

Firſt, We have here a very dreadful Spiritual Judgement inflicted upon the ſouls of men, *viz.* the hiding of the Goſpel from them: if our Goſpel be hid. For theſe words εἰ καὶ ἔστι are a conceſſion, that ſo it is; a very ſad, but undeniable truth. Many there are that ſee no beauty in Chriſt, nor neceſſity of him; though both are ſo plainly and evidently revealed in our Goſpel: *if our Goſpel be hid*: 'tis called *our Goſpel*; not as if *Paul* and the other Preachers of it were the *Authors* and Inventers of it; but our Goſpel, becauſe we are the Preachers and Diſpenſers of it. We are put in truſt with the Goſpel, and though we Preach it in the demonſtration of the Spirit and of power, uſing all plainneſs of ſpeech, to make men underſtand it: yet it is hid from many under our miniſtry: 'tis hid from their underſtandings, they ſee no glory in it; and hid from their hearts, they feel no power in it. Our Goſpel notwithſtanding all our endeavours is a hidden Goſpel unto ſome: this is the foreſt and moſt dreadful Judgement. 1.

Secondly, We have here an account of that wicked *Inſtrument* by whom this judgement is inflicted, *viz.* *Satan*: called 2.

called here (by a *Mimeſis*) *the god of this world*: not ſimply and properly, but becauſe he challenges to himſelf the honour of a God: rules over a vaſt *Empire*, and hath multitudes of ſouls, even the far greater part of the world in ſubjection and blind obedience to his government.

3. Thirdly, Here alſo we have an account of the politick manner of his government, how he maintains his dominion among men, and keeps the world in quiet ſubjection to him: namely, by blinding the minds of all them that believe not: putting out the eyes of all his ſubjects, darkning that noble faculty, the mind or underſtanding; the thinking, conſidering and reaſoning power of the ſoul which the *Philoſophers* truly call τὸ ἡγεμόνικον, the leading and directing faculty: for it is to the ſoul what eyes are to the body, and it is therefore called *the eyes of the underſtanding*, Eph. 1. 18. Theſe eyes Satan blinds, (*i. e.*) he darkens the mind and underſtanding with ignorance and error; ſo that when men come to ſee and conſider ſpiritual things, *they ſee indeed, but perceive not*, Iſa. 6. 9, 10. They have ſome general confuſed notions, but no diſtinct, powerful and effectual apprehenſions of thoſe things: and this is the way indeed, none like it, to bar men effectually from Jeſus Chriſt, and hinder the *application of the benefits of redemption* to their ſouls. 'Tis true, the righteous God permits all this to be done by Satan upon the ſouls of men; but whereſoever he finally prevails thus to blind them, it is as the Text ſpeaks, ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in them that are loſt*, or appointed of God unto perdition. The elect of God are all blinded for a time, but Chriſt applieth unto them his *Eye ſalve*: effectually opens the eyes of their underſtandings, and recovers them thereby out of Satans power and dominion: but as for thoſe who ſtill continue thus blinded, the *Symptoms* and *Characters* of eternal death appear upon their ſouls; they are a company of loſt men.

DOCT.

DOCT.

That the underſtandings of all unbelievers are blinded by Satans policies, in order to their everlaſting perdition.

Four things muſt be opened in the Doctrinal part of this point.

Firſt, what the blinding of the underſtanding or hiding of the Goſpel from the underſtanding is.

Secondly, I ſhall demonſtrate that the underſtandings of many are thus blinded, and the Goſpel hidden from them.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew what policies Satan uſes to blind the minds of men.

Fourthly, That this blindneſs is the ſoreſt judgement, and in order to mens everlaſting perdition.

Fifthly, And then apply the whole.

Firſt, we ſhall enquire what the blinding of the mind, or hiding of the Goſpel from it is. Two ſorts of men are thus blinded in the world. 1.

1. Thoſe that want the means of illumination.
2. Thoſe that have the means, but are denied the bleſſing and efficacy of them.

The former is the caſe of the *Pagan world*, who are in midnight darkneſs, for want of the Goſpel. The later is the caſe of the *Chriſtian world*. The greateſt part of them that live within the ſound of the Goſpel, being blinded by the God of this world, *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. *And he ſaid Go, and tell this people; hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy; and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* Thus when the Son of righteouſneſs actually roſe in the world it is ſaid, *John* 1. 5. *The light ſhined in darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehended it not.* So we may ſay of all that light which is in the underſtanding of all unbelievers what *Job* ſpeaks of the grave,

Job 10. 22. *That the light there is as darkneſs.* But more particularly to open the nature of this Spiritual blindneſs, I will ſhow you,

1. What it is not oppoſed unto.
2. What it is oppoſed unto.

Firſt, Let us examine what Spiritual blindneſs or the hiding of the Goſpel from the minds of men is not oppoſed unto, and we ſhall find,

Firſt, That it is not oppoſed unto natural wiſdom, a man may be of an acute and clear underſtanding; Eagle-eyed to diſcern the myſteries of nature, and yet the Goſpel may be hidden from him. Who were more ſagacious and quick-ſighted in natural things, than the heathen *Philoſophers*, renowned for wiſdom in their generation: Yet unto them the Goſpel was but *fooliſhneſs*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 20, 21. S. *Auguſtine* confeſſeth that before his converſion, he was filled with offence and contempt of the ſimplicity of the Goſpel. *Dedignabar eſſe parvulus*, ſaith he: I ſcorned to become a child again. And that great *Bradwardine*, the profound *Doctor*, who was learned *uſque ad ſtuporem*, even to a wonder; profeſſed that when he firſt read *Pauls Epiſtles*, he deſpiſed them, becauſe he found not in them *Metaphyſicum ingenium*, thoſe Metaphyſical Notions which he expected. Upon this account it was that Chriſt brake forth into that Pathetical gratulation of his fathers love to the elect, *Mat.* 11. 25. *At that time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth; becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.*

Secondly, It is not oppoſed to all light and knowledge in Spiritual truths. A man may have a true underſtanding of the Scriptures, give an Orthodox expoſition of them, and enlighten the minds of others by them: and yet the Goſpel may be hidden from himſelf, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name?* So *Rom.* 2. 19. *And art confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind, a light to them that ſit in darkneſs, &c.* A man may ſhew others the

the way to Christ and Salvation, whilst both are hid from himself.

Thirdly, It is not opposed to all kind of influences upon the affections, for it is possible the Gospel may touch the affections themselves, and cause some sweet Motions and Raptures in them; and yet be an hidden Gospel to the soul, *Heb.* 6. 5, 9.

Secondly, But if these three things may consist with spiritual blindness, unto what then is it opposed? To which I answer, that Spiritual blindness stands only opposed unto that saving Manifestation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, by the Spirit, whereby the soul is regenerated, and effectually changed by a real conversion unto God: Where-ever the Gospel thus comes in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power; producing such an effect as this in the soul; it is no longer an hidden Gospel to that soul, though such persons do not see clearly all that glory which is revealed by the Gospel: though they know but in part, and see darkly as through a glass; yet the eyes of their understandings are opened, and the things which belong to their peace are not hidden from them.

Secondly, But though this be the happiness of some men, yet it is demonstrable, that the eyes of many are blinded by the God of this world, and the Gospel is an hidden Gospel from them: for, 2.

First, Many that live under the Gospel are so entirely swallowed up in the affairs of this world, that they allow themselves no time to ponder the great concernments of their souls in the world to come, and judge you, whatever the gifts and knowledge of these men are, whether the God of this world hath not blinded their eyes. If it were not so, it were impossible that ever they should thus waste the most precious opportunities of salvation, upon which their everlasting well-being depends, and spend time at the door of eternity about trifles which so little concern them. Yet this is the case of the greatest number that go under the Christian name. The earth hath opened her mouth, and swallowed up their time, thoughts, studies, and strength as it did the bodies of *Corah*, and his *accomplices*. The first, the freest, and upon the matter the whole

of their time is devoted to the ſervice of the world: for even at that very time when the ypreſent their bodies before the Lord in the duties of his worſhip, their hearts are wandering after vanities, and *going after their covetouſneſs*, *Ezek.* 33. 31. Judge whether the God of this world hath blinded theſe men or no, who can ſee ſo much beauty in the world, but none in Chriſt, and put ſuch an abſolute neceſſity upon the vanities of this world, but none upon their own ſalvation. If this be not ſpiritual blindneſs, what is?

Secondly, The great ſtilneſs and quietneſs of mens conſciences under the moſt rouzing and awakening truths of the Goſpel, plainly proves that the God of this world hath blinded their eyes. For did men ſee and apprehend the dangerous condition they are in, as the word repreſents it; nothing in the world could quiet them but Chriſt. As ſoon as mens eyes come to be opened, the next enquiry they make is, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* It is not poſſible that a man ſhould hang over hell, ſee Chriſt and the hopes of ſalvation going, and the day of patience ending, and yet be quiet. O it cannot be, that conſcience ſhould let them be quiet in ſuch a caſe, if it were not blinded and ſtupified; but whilſt the God of this world *that ſtrong man armed keepeth the houſe, all his goods are in peace*, *Luke* 11. 21. If once your eyes were opened by conviction, a man may then ſay, Be quiet if you can; ſit ſtill, and let the hopes and ſeaſons of ſalvation paſs quietly away if you can. Suppoſe one ſhould come into the Congregation, and whiſper but ſuch a word as this in your ear, your child is fallen into the fire, and is dying, ſince you came from home; would it be in the power of all the friends you have, to quiet you, and make you ſit ſtill after ſuch an information? much leſs, when a man apprehends his own ſoul in immediate danger of the everlaſting burnings.

Thirdly, The ſtrong confidences and preſumptuous hopes men have of ſalvation, whilſt they remain in the ſtate of nature and unregeneracy, plainly ſhews their minds to be blinded by the policy of Satan. This preſumption is one of thoſe παραλόγισμοι, falſe reaſonings by which Satan deludes the underſtanding, as the *Apoſtle* calls them, *Jam.* 1. 22. 'Tis the cunning Sophiſtry of the Devil, farthered by ſelf-love, *Prov.* 21. 2.

21. 2. *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes*, and partly by self-ignorance, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Thou saidst I am rich and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor.* You have no fears, no doubts, no case to propound that concerns your future state, and why so? but because you have no sight, your consciences are quieted because your eyes are blinded.

Fourthly, The trifling of men with the duties of Religion plainly discovers the blinding power of Satan upon their minds and understandings, else they would never play and dally with the serious and solemn ordinances of God, at that rate they do; if their eyes were once opened they would be in earnest in prayer, and apply themselves with the closest attention of mind in hearing the Gospel. There are two sorts of thoughts about any subject of meditation. Some think at a distance, and others think close to the subject. Never do the thoughts of men come so close to Christ, to heaven and to hell, as they do immediately upon their illumination. When *Johns* Ministry enlightned the peoples minds, it is said, *Mat.* 11. 12. *From the days of* John *the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Surely these men were more in good earnest that would receive no repulse, take no denial; but even force themselves through all difficulties into heaven, and so would it be with you. If the God of this world had not blinded your minds, you would never pray with so much unconcernedness, nor hear with so much oscitancy and carelessness; pray as if you prayed not, and hear as if you heard not. It is with many of our hearers as it was with *Aristotle*, who after a quaint Oration made before him, was asked how he liked it: Truly said he, I did not hear it; for I was thinking all the while of another matter.

Fifthly, This also is a plain evidence that the God of this world hath blinded many mens eyes among us, for that they fear not to commit great sins, to avoid small hazards and troubles, which all the world could never perswade them to do, if they were not hoodwink'd by the God of this world. Those that have seen sin as sin in the glass of Gods Law, *will choose as* Moses *did, to suffer any affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy*

enjoy the pleaſures of ſin which are but for a ſeaſon, Heb. 11.25. Thoſe that have ſeen and felt the evil of ſin in the deep troubles of their ſpirits for it, will account all reproaches, all loſſes, all ſufferings from men, to be but flea-bitings to the burthen of ſin.

Sixthly, The pride and ſelf-conceitedneſs of many thouſands who profeſs Chriſtianity, plainly ſhews their minds to be blinded, by the *Sophiſtry of Satan*, and that they do not underſtand themſelves, and the woful ſtate of their own ſouls. Thoſe that ſee God in the cleareſt light, abhor themſelves in the deepeſt humility, *Iſa.* 6.5. *Job* 42.5. If ever the Lord had effectually opened your eyes by a clear diſcovery of your ſtate by nature, and the courſe of your life under the efficacy and influence of continual temptations and corruptions; how would your plumes fall? None in the world would rate you lower, than your ſelves would. By all which it appears, that multitudes are blinded by the God of this world.

3. Thirdly, In the third place, we are to conſider what policies Satan uſeth to blind the minds of them that believe not, and we ſhall find there are three ſorts of policies practiſed by the God of this world upon the minds and underſtandings of men, which he darkens,

By { 1. Hindering the reception of Goſpel-light.
2. Obſtructing the efficacy of it when received.
3. Making miſ-applications of it to other purpoſes.

Firſt, It is a great policy of Satan to blind the underſtandings of men by hindering and preventing the reception of Goſpel light, which he doth eſpecially theſe five ways.

Firſt, By tempting the diſpenſers of the Goſpel to darken the truths thereof in their delivering of them, to ſhoot over the heads of their hearers, in lofty language and terms of art, ſo that common underſtandings can give no account when the Sermon is done, what the preacher would have, but however commend him for a good Scholar, and an excellent Orator. I make no doubt but the Devil is very buſie with Miniſters in their

their Studies, tempting them by the pride of their own hearts to gratifie his design herein, he teaches them how to paint the glass, that he may keep out the light.

I acknowledge a proper, grave and comely stile befits the lips of Christs *Ambassadours*, they should not be rude and careless in their language or method. But this affectation of great swelling words of vanity is but too like the proud *Gnosticks*, whom the *Apostle* is supposed to tax for this evil, *Jude v.* 16. *This is to darken counsel, by words without knowledge*, *Job* 31. 2. To amuse and bemist poor ignorant souls; and nullifie the design of preaching: for every thing is accounted so far good, as it is good to the end it is ordained for. A sword that hath an hilt of Gold, set thick with Diamonds, is no good sword if it have no edge to cut, or want a good back to follow home the stroke. O that the Ministers of Christ would choose rather sound than great words, such as are apt to pierce the heart, rather than such as tickle the fancy, and let people beware of furthering the design of Satan against their own souls, in putting a temptation upon their Ministers, by despising plain preaching. The more popular, plain, and intelligible our discourses are, so much the more probable they are to be successful; that is the most excellent Oratory that perswades men to Christ.

Qui populariter, puriliter, trivialiter, & simplicissime docent, optimi ad vulgus sunt concionatores. Bucholtz.

Secondly, Satan hinders the access of light to the understandings of men, by imploying their minds about impertinent things; while they are attending upon the Ordinances of God. Thus he tempted them in *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32. *And they come unto thee as thy people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice.* The modulation of the Prophets voice was very pleasing to their ears, but mean while their fancies and thoughts were wandring after their lusts, their hearts were full of earthly projects.

Thirdly, Satan hinders the access of light to the understandings of men by raising Objections, and picking quarrels with the word on purpose to shake its authority, and hinder the assent of the understanding to it, and so the word makes

no

no more impreſſion, than a fable or *Romance* would do. And never did this deſign of Satan obtain more than in this Atheiſtical age, wherein the main pillars and foundation of Religion are ſhaken in the minds of multitudes. The Devil hath perſwaded many that the Goſpel is but a cunningly deviſed fable. *Fabula Chriſti*, as that blaſpheming *Pope* called it: That Miniſters muſt ſay ſomewhat to get a living. That heaven and hell are but fancies, or at moſt things of great uncertainty and doubtful credit. This being once obtained, the door of the ſoul is ſhut againſt truth. And this deſign of Satan hath proſpered the more in this generation, by the corrupt doctrines of ſeducing ſpirits, *which have overthrown the faith of ſome*, 2 *Tim.*2.18. And partly from the ſcandalous lives of looſe and vain profeſſors, the Goſpel hath been brought into contempt; but eſpecially by Satans artificial improvement of the corrupt natures of men, in an age wherein conſcience hath been ſo much debauched, and Atheiſm thereby ſpread as a gangreen in the body *politick*.

Fourthly, Satan hinders the acceſs of light by helping erroneous minds to draw falſe concluſions, and perverſe inferences from the great and precious truths of the Goſpel; and thereby bringing them under prejudice and contempt: thus he aſſiſts the errors of mens minds about the doctrine of *Election*; when he either perſwades them that it is an unreaſonable doctrine, and not worthy of credit, that God ſhould chooſe ſome, and refuſe others every way as good as thoſe he hath choſen: or if there be any certainty in that doctrine, then men may throw the reins upon the neck of their luſts, and live at what rate they liſt. For if God have choſen them to ſalvation, their wickedneſs ſhall not hinder it; and if he have appointed them unto wrath, their diligence and ſelf-denial cannot prevent it.

Thus the Doctrine of free grace is by the like Sophiſtry of Satan turned into laſciviouſneſs. If grace abound, men may ſin the more freely; and the ſhortneſs of our time upon earth which in its own nature awakens all men to diligence, is by the ſubtilty of Satan turned to a quite contrary purpoſe, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die.*

Fifthly, Satan darkens the minds of men, and ſhuts them up

againſt the light; by blowing them up with pride and ſelf-conceitedneſs, perſwading them that they know all theſe things already: and cauſing them to contemn the moſt weighty and precious truths of God, as trite and vulgar notions. The word cannot be received without meekneſs, and humility of mind, *Jam.* 1. 21. *Pſal.* 25. 8, 9. and pride is the nurſe of ignorance, 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. 1 *Cor.* 8. 7. The Devil is aware of this, and therefore blows up the pride and conceitedneſs of mens hearts all that he can: and this temptation of his generally prevails whereever it meets with a knowing head, matched with a graceleſs and unſanctified heart. And thus we ſee by what wiles and policies Satan keeps out the light, and prevents the acceſs of it to the minds of men.

But if he miſs his deſign here, and truth gets into the mi nd, Then

Secondly, he labours to obſtruct the *efficacy* and operation of the light, that though it do ſhine into the underſtanding, yet it ſhall be impriſoned there; and ſend down no converting influences upon the will and affections: and this deſign he promotes and manages diverſe ways.

Firſt, By haſtening to quench convictions betime, and nip them in the bud. Satan knows how dangerous a thing it is, and deſtructive to his intereſt, to ſuffer convictions to continue long; and therefore it is ſaid of him, *Mat.* 13. 19. *When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and underſtandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was ſown in his heart.* Satan is compared in this Scripture to the fowls of the air, which pick up the ſeed before it take any root in the earth. The Devil is very jealous of this, and therefore labours all he can to deſtroy the word before it comes to operate upon the heart, which he doth ſometimes by the cares of the world, and ſometimes by vain companions who prove meer quench coals unto beginning convictions. One ſinner deſtroyeth much good.

Secondly, No ſooner doth the God of this world obſerve the light of truth begin to operate upon the heart, but he obſtructeth that deſign by *procraſtinations* and delays, which delude and baffle the convinced ſoul; he perſwades them if

they will alter their courſe, it will be time enough hereafter, when ſuch incumbrances, and troubles in the world are over; if he prevail here, 'tis a thouſand to one but the work miſcarries, *James* 1.23, 24. if the hearer of the word be not a doer (*i.e.*) a preſent doer while the impreſſions of it are freſh upon the ſoul, *he doth but deceive himſelf.* For it is with the heart as it is with melted wax, if the ſeal be clapt to it preſently, it will receive a fair impreſſion; but if it be let alone but for a little while, you can make none at all; it was therefore *Davids* great care and wiſdom to ſet about the work of Religion under the firſt *impetus* or vigorous motion of his heart and affections, *Pſal.* 119. 60. *I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.* Multitudes of ſouls have periſhed by theſe delays. 'Tis a temptation incident to all that are under beginning convictions, eſpecially young perſons, whom the Devil perſwades that it were no better than madneſs in them to abridge and deny themſelves ſo much delight and pleaſure, and ſteep their youthful thoughts in ſuch a melancholy ſubject as Religion is.

Thirdly, If all this will not do, but convictions ſtill continue and get ground in the conſcience, then he endeavours to ſcare, and fright them out of their convictions, by repreſenting to them the inward terrours, troubles and deſpairs into which they are about to plunge themſelves, and that henceforth they muſt never expect a pleaſant day or comfortable hour. Thus doth the God of this world blind the minds of them that believe not, both by hindering the acceſs of light to the mind, and the influence of it upon the heart.

3. Thirdly, There is yet one policy of Satan to keep ſouls in darkneſs, and that is by the miſ-application of truth; perſwading them that whatſoever they read or hear of the miſery and danger of Chriſtleſs and unregenerate perſons, doth not in the leaſt touch or concern them, but the more notorious and prophane part of the world; and by this policy he blinds the minds of all civil and moral perſons. Thus the *Phariſees truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others.* And ſo the *Laodiceans* thought themſelves *rich, and increaſed with goods*; that is, in a very ſafe and good condition. Now there are

See my Touchſtone of ſincerity, upon *Rev.* 3. 17, 18.

are diverſe things notably improved by Satans policy, in order to theſe miſapplications of truth: as

Firſt, The freedom of their lives from the moſt groſs pollutions of the world. *Mat.* 19. 20. *All theſe things have I kept from my youth up:* A civil, ſober courſe of life is a moſt effectual blind before the eyes of many a mans conſcience.

Secondly, It is the policy of Satan to prevent conviction, by conviction. I mean effectual convictions, by convictions that have been ineffectual, and are now vaniſhed away. Thus the troubles that ſome perſons have been under, muſt paſs for their converſion, though the temper of their heart be the ſame it was: their ineffectual troubles are made uſe of by the Devil to blind them in the true knowledge and apprehenſion of their condition. For theſe men and women can ſpeak of the troubles they have had for ſin, and the many tears they have ſhed for it; whereby thorough conviction is effectually prevented.

Thirdly, Gifts and knowledge are improved by the policy of Satan againſt the true knowlege of Jeſus Chriſt, and our own eſtate by nature. As conviction is improved by Satans policy againſt conviction, ſo is knowledge, againſt knowledge. This was the caſe of them in *Rom.* 2. 17, 18. *Thou art called a Jew, and reſteſt in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God, and knoweſt his will, and approveſt the things that are excellent; being inſtructed out of the law, and art confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide to the blind, &c.* And this is the temptation and deluſion of knowing perſons, who are ſo far from being blind in their own account, that they account themſelves the guides of the blind: yet who blinder than ſuch men?

Fourthly, External reformation is improved by the policy of Satan againſt true Spiritual reformation, and paſſes current up and down the world. For converſion, though it ſerves only to ſtrengthen Satans intereſt in the ſoul, *Mat.* 12. 44. and for want of a real change of heart doth but increaſe their ſin and miſery, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. This is the generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet are not waſhed from their filthineſs. The *cleanneſs* of their hands blinds them in diſcovering the *foulneſs* of their hearts.

Fifthly, The policy of Satan improves diligence in ſome

duties, againſt the convictions of other duties. The external duties of Religion, as hearing, praying, faſting, againſt the great duties of repenting and believing. This was their caſe, *Iſa* 58. 2, 3. *Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs; and forſook not the Ordinances of their God. They ask of me the Ordinances of Juſtice, they take delight in approching to God. Wherefore have we faſted ſay they, and thou ſeeſt not, wherefore have we afflicted our ſouls, and thou takeſt no knowledge?* Thus duty is improved againſt duty, the externals againſt the internals of Religion, and multitudes are blinded this way.

Sixthly, The policy of Satan improves zeal againſt zeal; and thereby blinds a great part of the world: he allows men to be zealous againſt a falſe religion, if thereby he may prevent them from being zealous in the true Religion. He diverts their zeal againſt their own ſins, by ſpending it againſt other mens. Thus *Paul* was once blinded by his own zeal for the law, *Act.* 22. 3. And many men at this day ſatisfie themſelves in their own zeal againſt the corruptions of Gods worſhip, and the ſuperſtitions of others; who never felt the power of true Religion upon their own hearts: a dangerous blind of Satan.

Seventhly, The policy of Satan improves the eſteem and reſpect men have from the people of God, againſt their great duty and intereſt to become ſuch themſelves, *Rev.* 3. 1. *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, but thou art dead.* It is enough to many men that they obtain acceptation among the Saints, though they be none of that number; the good opinion of others begets and confirms their good opinion of themſelves.

Eighthly, The policy of Satan improves ſoundneſs of *Judgment*, againſt ſoundneſs of *heart*. An Orthodox head, againſt an Orthodox heart and life; Dogmatical faith, againſt juſtifying faith. This was the caſe of them before mentioned, *Rom.* 2. 18, 19. Men ſatisfie themſelves that they have a ſound underſtanding, though mean while they have a very rotten heart. 'Tis enough for them that their heads are regular, though their hearts and lives be very irregular.

Ninthly, The policy of Satan improves the *bleſſings* of God, againſt the *bleſſings* of God, blinding us by the bleſſings of providence, ſo as not to diſcern the want of ſpiritual bleſſings, perſwading

perſwading men that the ſmiles of providence in their proſperity, ſucceſs, and thriving deſigns in the world, are good evidences of the love of God to their ſouls, not at all diſcerning how the proſperity of fools deceives them, and that riches are often given to the hurt of the owners thereof.

Tenthly, The policy of Satan improves comforts againſt comfort, falſe and ungrounded comforts under the word, againſt the real grounds of comfort, lying in the ſouls intereſt in Chriſt. Thus many men finding a great deal of comfort in the promiſes, are ſo blinded thereby, as never to look after Union with Chriſt the only ſolid ground of all true comfort, *Heb.* 6. 5, 9.

And thus you ſee, how the God of this world blindeth the minds of them that believe not, and how the Goſpel is hid to them that are loſt.

The

The Thirty fifth SERMON.

Sermon 35.

Text. 2 COR. 4. 3, 4.

But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.

THe words have been opened, and this point obſerved.

DOCT.

Doct. *That the underſtandings of all unbelievers are blinded by Satans policies, in order to their everlaſting perdition.*

We have ſhewn already what the blinding of the mind, or hiding of the Goſpel from it is, it hath alſo been demonſtrated that the Goſpel is hid, and the minds of many blinded under it; you have alſo ſeen what policies Satan uſes to blind the minds of men, even in the cleareſt light of the Goſpel. It remains now that *I* open to you the dreadful nature of this judgement of God upon the ſouls of men, and then make application of the whole.

There are many Judgements of God inflicted upon the ſouls and bodies of men in this world, but none of them are ſo dreadful as thoſe Spiritual Judgements are, which God inflicts immediate'y

mediately upon the ſoul; and among Spiritual Judgements few or none are of more dreadful nature and conſequence, than this of ſpiritual blindneſs; which will appear by conſidering,

First, The *Subject* of this Judgement which is the ſoul, and the principal power of the ſoul, which is the mind and underſtanding faculty: the ſoul is the moſt precious and invaluable part of man, and the mind is the ſuperiour and moſt noble power of the ſoul: it is to the ſoul what the eye is to the body, the directive faculty. The bodily eye is a curious, tender, and moſt precious part of the body. When we would expreſs the value of a thing, we ſay, we prize it as our eyes. The loſs of the eyes is a ſore loſs, we loſe a great part of the comfort of this world by it. Yet ſuch an affliction (ſpeaking comparatively) is but a trifle to this. If our bodily eyes be blinded we cannot ſee the ſun, but if our ſpiritual eye be blinded we cannot ſee God, we wander in the paths of ſin, 1 *John* 2. 11. we are led blindfold to hell by Satan, as the *Syrians* were into *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* 6. 19, 20. and then our eyes like theirs will be opened to ſee our miſery, when it is too late, *The light of the body is the eye* (ſaith Chriſt) *If therefore thine eye be ſingle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body ſhall be full of darkneſs. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs!* *Mat.* 6. 22, 23. By the eye he means the practical judgment, the underſtanding faculty, which is the ſeat of principles, the common treaſury of rules for practice, according unto which a mans life is formed, and his way directed. If therefore this power of the ſoul be darkened, how great muſt that darkneſs be! for now the blind lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch. The blind judgement miſguides the blind affections; and both fall into hell. O what a ſad thing is it that the Devil ſhould lead that, that leads thee? That he ſhould ſit at the *helm*, and ſteer thy courſe to damnation? The blinding of this noble faculty precipitates the ſoul into the moſt dangerous courſes, perſecution by this means ſeems to be true zeal for God. *John* 16. 2. *They that perſecute you ſhall think that they do God ſervice.* Paul *once thought verily with himſelf, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jeſus of Nazareth*, Acts 26. 9. (*i. e.*) He thought he had pleaſed God, when he was impriſoning

and

and perſecuting his people; as many do at this day: it will make a man to ſin conſcientiouſly, which is a very dangerous way of ſinning, and difficult to be reclaimed.

Secondly, it is a dreadful Judgement if we conſider the *Object* about which the underſtanding is blinded, which is Jeſus Chriſt, and Union with him; Regeneration and the nature and neceſſity thereof. For this blindneſs is not univerſal, but reſpective and particular. A man may have abundance of light and knowledge in things natural, and moral: but ſpiritual things are hidden from his eyes. Yea, a man may know ſpiritual things in a natural way, which increaſeth his blindneſs; but he cannot diſcern them ſpiritually: this is a ſore judgement, and greatly to be bewailed. *Thou haſt hid theſe things* (ſaid Chriſt) *from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes*, *Mat.* 11. 25. Learned and knowing men are ignorant of thoſe things which very *babes* in Chriſt underſtand. They are prudent in the management of earthly affairs: but to ſave their own ſouls they have no knowledge. They are able with *Berengarius* to diſpute *De omni ſcibili*, of every thing inveſtigable by the light of nature: yea, to open the ſcripture ſolidly, and defend the doctrines, and truths of Chriſt againſt his adverſaries ſucceſsfully; and yet blinded in the great myſtery of regeneration. *Blindneſs in part* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is happened unto Iſrael*: and that indeed was the principal part of knowledg, *viz.* the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified, we ſee farther than they. The literal knowledge of Chriſt ſhines clearly in our underſtandings. We are only blinded about thoſe things which ſhould give us ſaving intereſt in him, about the *effectual application* of Chriſt to our own ſouls.

Thirdly, The dreadful nature of this ſpiritual blindneſs farther appears from the conſideration of the ſeaſon in which it befalls men, which is the very time of Gods patience, and the only opportunity they have for ſalvation: after theſe opportunities are over, their eyes will be opened to ſee their miſery, but alas, too late, too late. Upon this account Chriſt ſhed thoſe tears over *Jeruſalem*, *Luke* 19. 42. *O that thou hadſt known, at leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.* Now the ſeaſon of grace is paſt and gone: opportunities are the golden ſpots of time,

and

and there is much time in a ſhort opportunity, as there are many pieces of ſilver in one piece of gold. Time ſignifies nothing when opportunities are gone, to be blinded in the very ſeaſon of ſalvation is the Judgement of all Judgements, the greateſt miſery incident to man; to have our eyes opened, when the ſeaſons of ſalvation are paſt, is but an aggravation of miſery: There is a twofold opening of mens eyes to ſee their danger.

Viz. { 1. Graciouſly to prevent danger.
2. Judicially to aggravate miſery.

They whoſe eyes are not opened graciouſly in this world to ſee their diſeaſe and remedy in Chriſt, ſhall have their eyes opened judicially in the world to come, to ſee their diſeaſe without any remedy. If God open them now, it is by way of *prevention*, if they be not opened until then, it will produce *deſperation*.

Fourthly, The horrible nature of this Judgement farther appears, from the exceeding difficulty of curing it, eſpecially in men of excellent natural indowments and accompliſhments, *Joh.* 9.40,41. *And ſome of the Phariſees which were with him, heard theſe words, and ſaid unto him, Are we blind alſo? Jeſus ſaid unto them, If ye were blind, ye ſhould have no ſin: but now ye ſay we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth, q. d.* The pride and conceitedneſs of your hearts adds obſtinacy and incurableneſs to your blindneſs, theſe are *the blind people that have eyes, Iſa.* 43. 8. *in ſeeing they ſee not.* The conviction of ſuch men is next to an impoſſibility.

Fifthly, The deſign and end of this blindneſs under the Goſpel is moſt dreadful, ſo ſaith my Text, *the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Anſwerable whereunto are thoſe words, *Iſa.* 6. 10. *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes: leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their heart; and convert, and be healed.*

Ira eſt Dei non intelligere delicta, ne ſequatur pœnitentia, Cyp. Ep. 3.

Percuſſi ſunt animi cæcitate ut nec intelligant delicta, nec plangant: indignantis eſt ira, Cypr. *de lapſis.* *Dei major hæc*

So that it is plain, this blinding is a *præludium* to damnation, as the covering of *Hamans* face was to his deſtruction. When the Lord hath no purpoſe of grace and mercy to a mans ſoul, then to bring about the damnation of that man by a righteous permiſſion; many occaſions of blindneſs befal him, which Satan improves effectually unto his eternal ruine, among which fatal occaſions, blind guides, and ſcandalous profeſſors are none of the leaſt, they ſhall be fitted with Miniſters ſuitable to their humours, who ſhall ſpeak ſmooth things: *if a man walk in the Spirit, and falſhood* (i.e. by an ἐν δὲ ψεύδει — the ſpirit of falſhood) *do lie ſaying, I will propheſie to thee of wine and ſtrong drink, he ſhall even be the prophet of this people:* and the ſlips and falls of profeſſors ſhall do the Devil not a little ſervice in this his fatal deſign. *Mat.* 18. 7. *Wo to the world becauſe of offences*: This ſhall blind them, and harden them to purpoſe. Thus you ſee what a dreadful Judgement this is, a ſtroak of God upon the ſoul which cuts off all the preſent comforts of Chriſt and Religion from it, takes away the bridle of reſtraint from ſin, and makes way for the final ruine of the ſoul. A far greater Judgement it is, than the greateſt calamity or affliction, which can befal us in this world. If our names ſuffer by the greateſt reproaches, our bodies by the moſt painful diſeaſes, our eſtates by the greateſt loſſes; if God ſtrike every comfort we have in this world dead by affliction: all this is nothing compared with this blinding Judgement of God upon the ſoul. For they may come from the tender love of God to us, *Heb.* 12. 6. But this is the effect of his wrath, they may cleanſe ſin, *Iſa.* 27. 9. but this increaſes it; they often prove occaſions of converſion, *Job* 36. 8, 9. but this is the great obſtruction to it. In a word, they only wound the fleſh, and that with a curable wound; but this ſtabs the ſoul, and that with a mortal wound.

Uſe 1. 1*ſt. Uſe of Information.*

Inference 1.

Inference 1. *If this be the caſe of the unbelieving world to be ſo blinded by the God of the world; how little ſhould we valne the cenſures and ſlanders*

ſlanders of the blind world? Certainly they ſhould move no other affection but pity in our ſouls: If their eyes were opened, their mouths would be ſhut, they would never traduce Religion and the ſincere profeſſors of it as they do, if Satan had not blinded their minds: they ſpeak evil of the things they know not, their reproaches which they let fly ſo freely, are but ſo many arrows ſhot by the blind mans bow, which only ſtick in our clothes and can do us no hurt, except we thruſt them onward by our own diſcontent to the wounding of our ſpirits. *I could almoſt be proud upon it (ſaid* Luther) *that I have got an ill name among the worſt men.* Beware Chriſtians that you give them no occaſion to blaſpheme the name of your God, and then never trouble your ſelves however they uſe your names. If they tread it in the dirt now, God (as one ſpeaks) will take it up, waſh off all that dirt, and deliver it you again clear and ſhining. Should ſuch men ſpeak well of us, we might juſtly ſuſpect our ſelves of ſome iniquity which adminiſters to them the occaſion of it.

Superbus fio quod video nomen peſſimum mihi cœſcere. Luther. *Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum quem mundus oderit.* Hieronymus.

Inference 2.

How abſurd and dangerous muſt it be for Chriſtians to follow the examples of the blind world? Let the blind follow the blind, but let not thoſe whom God hath enlightned do ſo. Chriſtians, never let thoſe lead you, who are led blindfolded by the Devil themſelves. The holineſs and heavenlineſs of Chriſtians was wont to ſet the world a wondering that they would not run with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. But ſure ſince God hath opened your eyes, and ſhewed you the dangerous courſes they walk in, it would be the greateſt wonder of all, if you ſhould be the companions of ſuch men, and tread in the ſteps of their examples. Chriſtian, as humble and lowly thoughts as thou haſt of thy ſelf, yet I would have thee underſtand thy ſelf to be too good to be the aſſociate of ſuch men. *Diſcamus ſanctam ſuperbiam, & ſciamus noſſe illis meliores.* If they will walk with you in the way of duty and holineſs, let them come and welcome: receive them with both arms, and be glad of their company; but beware you walk not in their paths, leſt they be a ſnare unto you. Did

Inference 2.

they ſee the end of their way, they would never walk in it themſelves, why then will you walk with them, who do ſee it?

Inference 3.

Inference 3. *If this be ſo, let Chriſtians be exact, and circumſpect in their walking, leſt they lay a ſtumbling block in the way of the blind.* 'Tis a great ſin to do ſo in a proper ſenſe, *Lev.* 19. 14. *Thou ſhalt not put a ſtumbling block before the blind.* And a far greater to do it in a *Metaphorical* ſenſe, *Rom.* 14. 13. 'Tis the expreſs will of God, *that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way.* 'Tis an argument of little regard to the honour of Chriſt, or the ſouls of men ſo to do. O profeſſours, look to your ſteps. The Devil deſires to make uſe of you for ſuch purpoſes. The ſins of thouſands of others who make no profeſſion of godlineſs, will never ſo fit his purpoſe for the blinding of thoſe mens eyes, as the leaſt ſlip or failing of yours will do. 'Tis the living bird that makes the beſt ſtale to draw others into the net: the groſſeſt wickedneſs of prophane ſinners paſſeth away in ſilence, but all the neighbourhood ſhall ring with your miſcarriages. A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled *fountain and a corrupt ſpring*, *Prov.* 25. 26. The ſcandalous falls of good men are like a bag of poiſon caſt by Satan into the Spring from whence the whole town is ſupplied with water. You little know what miſchief you do, and how many blind ſinners may fall into hell by your occaſion.

Inference 4.

Inference 4. *How dangerous a thing is zeal in a wicked man?* 'Tis a ſharp ſword in a blind mans hand, or like high mettle in a blind horſe: how much hath the Church of God ſuffered upon this account, and doth ſuffer at this day? The world hath ever been full of ſuch blind and bluſtering zeal, which *like a hurry-cane* overturns all that ſtands in its way: yea, (as we noted before) it makes a man a kind of conſcientious perſecutor. *I* confeſs it is better for the perſecutor himſelf to do it ignorantly, becauſe ignorance leaves him in a capacity for mercy, and

and ſets him a degree lower than the malicious enlightned perſecutor, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. Elſe it were the dreadful caſe deſcribed in *Heb.* 10. But yet as it is, *John* 16. 2. theſe are the fierce and dreadful enemies of the Church of God. Such a man was *Paul*, a devout perſecutour, and ſuch perſecution God afterward ſuffered to befal himſelf. *Acts* 13. 50. *But the Jews ſtirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the City; and raiſed perſecution againſt* Paul *and* Barnabas, *and expelled them out of their coaſts.* An erroneous conſcience binds as well as an informed conſcience, and where ever God gives ſuch men opportunity to vent the ſpleen and rage of their hearts upon his people, they will be ſure to do it to purpoſe. With other men *Gamaliels* counſel may have ſome influence, and they may be afraid leſt they be found fighters againſt God; but blind zeal ſpurrs on, and ſaith as *Jehu* did, *Come, ſee my zeal for the Lord of hoſts.* O blind ſinners, be ſure of your *Mark* before you diſcharge your *arrows.* If you ſhoot at a wicked man (as you ſuppoſe him) and God finds one of his dear children wounded, or deſtroyed; what account will you give of that fact to God, when you ſhall come before his Judgement ſeat?

2d. *Uſe of Exhortation.*

This point is very improveable by way of *Exhortation,* *Uſe.* 2.

Both { 1. Unto thoſe, who are blinded by the God of this world.
2. To thoſe that are enlightned in the knowledge of Chriſt, by the true God.

Firſt, To thoſe who are ſtill blinded by the God of this world, to whom the Lord hath not given unto this day, eyes to ſee their miſery in themſelves, or their remedy in Chriſt, ſo as to make an *effectual Application* of him to their own ſouls. To all ſuch my counſel is,

1. To

1. To get a ſenſe of your own blindneſs.
2. To ſeek out for a cure, whilſt yet it may be had.

Firſt, Labour to get a deep ſenſe of the miſery of ſuch a condition; for till you be awakened by conviction, you can never be healed. O that you did but know the true difference betwixt common and ſaving light, the want of this keeps you in darkneſs: you think becauſe you know the ſame things that the moſt ſanctified man doth, that therefore there is no difference betwixt his knowledge and yours; and are therefore ready to ſay to them as *Job* to his friends, *Lo, mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard, and underſtood it: What ye know, the ſame do I know alſo; I am not inferiour unto you, Job* 13. 1, 2. But O that you would be convinced that your knowledge vaſtly differs from the knowledge of believers. Though you know the ſame things that they do, it is a knowledge of another kind and nature. You know ſpiritual things in another way, meerly by the light of reaſon aſſiſted and improved by the common light of the Goſpel: they know the ſame things by ſpiritual illumination, and in an experimental way. 1 *John* 2. 20. *Ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.* Their knowledge is practical, yours is idle. They are working out their ſalvation by that light which God hath given them, *Pſal.* 111. 10. Their knowledge of God and Chriſt produces the fruits of faith, obedience, mortification, and heavenly mindedneſs in them: It hath no ſuch fruits in you: whatever light there be in your underſtandings, it makes no alteration at all upon your hearts. Their light brings them to heaven, *John* 17. 3. Yours ſhall be blown out by death, 1 *Cor.* 13. 8. and your ſelves left in the miſts of eternal darkneſs: except your eyes be opened ſeaſonably by the anointing of the holy Ghoſt. Conviction is a great part of your cure.

Secondly, Labour to get a remedy for this dangerous diſeaſe of your minds: *Awake to righteouſneſs and ſin not, for ſome have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame,* 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. Theſe things ſpeak incouragement to you: though it be a ſore Judgement that lies upon you, and very difficult to be removed: yet remember Jeſus Chriſt is put into Commiſſi-

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on by God the Father to open the blind eyes, *Isa.* 42. 6, 7. and this excellent *Physician* bespeaks you for his patients, *Rev.* 3. 18. *Anoint thine eyes* (saith he) *with eye-salve that thou mayest see.* Yea, the most enlightned Christians were once as dark and blind in spiritual things as you are, and Christ hath cured them, *Eph.* 5. 8. *Once were you darkness, now are ye light in the Lord.* Attend therefore upon the Ordinances of the Gospel diligently, that's Gods enlightning instrument, by which he couches those *Cataracts* which blind the eyes of mens understandings, *Acts* 26. 18. And if ever you will have your eyes opened, allow your selves time to ponder, and consider what you hear. The duty of Meditation is a very enlightning duty: Above all cry to the Lord Jesus Christ as that poor man did, *Lord that mine eyes may be opened, that I may receive my sight.* Say, Lord, this is my disease and danger, that in seeing I see not: others see natural things in a spiritual way, whilst I see spiritual things only in a natural way: their light is operative upon their hearts, mine is but an idle impractical notion of Religion, which brings forth no fruit of holiness. Their knowledge sets their hands a work in duties of obedience: mine only sets my tongue a work in discourses of those things which my heart never felt. Lord, open mine eyes and make me to see out of this obscurity: All the light that is in me is but darkness. O Lord enlighten my darkness, enlighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.

Secondly, Let it be a word of counsel and exhortation to such as once were blind, but do now see.

First, I beseech you bless God for the least degree of spiritual illumination. *Truly light is sweet, and 'tis a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun, Eccles.* 11. 7. But Oh how sweet is spiritual light! and what a pleasaut thing to behold the Son of Righteousness! Blessed are your eyes for they see. God hath brought you out of darkness into marvellous light. And marvellous indeed it must needs be, when you consider how many wise and prudent men are under the power of spiritual darkness, whilst such babes as you, are enlightened. *Mat.* 11. 25. It greatly affected the heart of Christ, O let it affect yours also.

Secondly, Labour to get a clearer sight of spiritual things every day. For all spiritual light is encreasing light, *which*

shineth

ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day, *Prov.* 4. 18. O if a little ſpiritual light be ſo comfortable, what would more be? The wiſdom of God is *a manifold wiſdom*, *Eph.* 3. 16. The beſt of us ſee but little of it. Labour therefore to know ſpiritual things more *extenſively*, and more experimentally, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. be ſtill encreaſing in the knowledge of God.

Thirdly, Walk as men whoſe eyes are opened. *Once ye were darkneſs, now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of the light*, *Eph.* 5. 8. Elſe your light will but aggravate your ſin. Remember how it diſpleaſed God that *Solomons* heart was turned from the Lord God of *Iſrael which had appeared to him twice*, 1 *Kings* 11. 9. Remember how angry God was with the *Heathens* for abuſing the dim common light of nature, *Rom.* 1. 21. how much more evil is it in you to abuſe the moſt precious light that ſhineth in this world? and what miſchievous effects the abuſe of your light will have upon this blind world. It was a ſmart rebuke given once by an *Atheiſt* to a good man, who being asked by him how he could ſatisfie his conſcience to live as he did? nay rather ſaid the *Atheiſt*, I wonder how you can ſatisfie your ſelf to live as you do; for did I believe as you do, that there is ſuch a Chriſt, and ſuch a glory as you believe there is; I would pray and live at another rate than you do.

The Concluſion.

And now Reader, after all my diſcourſes of the method of Chriſt in *purchaſing* the great Salvation for us, and the way of the Spirit in *applying* it, and making it effectual to Gods Elect; thou haſt two wonders before thine eyes, either of which may aſtoniſh thy ſoul in the conſideration of them.

Viz. { 1. The admirable Grace of God in preparing } this great
2. The deſperate wickedneſs of man in rejecting } ſalvation.

1. Firſt, Behold the riches of the goodneſs and mercy of God in preparing ſuch a remedy as this for loſt man. This is that which

which is justly called *the great mystery of Godliness*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. That mystery which the *Prophets* enquired diligently after, yea, which the *Angels desire to look into*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 10, 12. In this glorious mystery of Redemption that πολυποίκιλος σοφία manifold wisdom of God, or that wisdom which hath such curious and admirable variety in it, is illustriously displayed, *Eph.* 4. 10. Yea, the contrivement of our Redemption this way, is the most glorious display of Divine *Love* that ever was made, or can be made in this world to the children of men: for so the Apostle will be understood when he saith, *Rom.* 3. 8. *Συνίστησι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην*—— God hath set forth or presented his love to man in the most taking manner, in a way that commends it beyond all compare, to the acceptation of men. *This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. It might be justly expected, that when this glorious mystery should come to be published by the Gospel in the ears of sinners, all eyes should be withdrawn from all other objects, and fixed with admiration upon Christ, all hearts should be ravished with these glad tidings; and every man pressing to Christ with greatest zeal and diligence. But behold, instead thereof,

Secondly, The desperate wickedness of the world in rejecting the only remedy prepared for them. This was long since foretold by the Prophet *Isaiah* 53. 3. *He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not*: His poor and mean appearance, which should endear him beyond all considerations to the souls of men (since it was for their sakes that he emptied himself of all his glory,) yet this lays him under contempt, he is looked on as the very offcast of men; when his own love to man had emptied him of all his riches, the wickedness of men loaded him with contempt, and as it was propheſied of him, so it was, and at this day is sadly verified all the world over. For

חרל אשים *desitio virorum. Nil habet infœlix paupertas durius in se, quam quod ridiculos homines facit.* Juven.

First, The *Pagan* world hath no knowledge of him, they are lost in darkness. *God hath suffered them to walk in their own ways*, Acts 14. 16.

Secondly, The *Mahumetans* which overſpread ſo great a part of the world reject him, and inſtead of the bleſſed Goſpel which they hiſs out with abhorrence, embrace the blaſphemous and ridiculous *Alcoran*, which they confidently affirm to have come down from God immediately in that *laylatto Hanzili* (as they call it) the night of demiſſion, calling all Chriſtians *Caſirouna* (i. e.) infidels.

Thirdly, The *Jews* reject him with abhorrence, and ſpit at his very name, and being blindfolded by the Devil, they call *Jeſus Anathema*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 3. And in a blind zeal for *Moſes*, blaſpheme him as an Impoſtor. *He came to his own, and his own received him not*, *John* 1. 11.

Chriſti nomen habere, & non pati Chriſti vicem, peſſimè, quia aliud eſt quam prævaricatio divini nominis? Cyp. de Zelo.

Fourthly, The far greater part of the Chriſtianized world reject him: thoſe that are called after his name, will not ſubmit to his Government. The *Nobles* of the world think themſelves diſhonoured by ſubmitting their necks to his yoke. The *Senſualiſts* of the world will not deny their luſts, or forſake their pleaſures, for all the treaſures of righteouſneſs, life, and peace which his blood hath purchaſed. The *worldlings* of the earth prefer the dirt and dung of the world before him: and few there be among them that profeſs Chriſtianity, who love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity. The only reaſon why they are called Chriſtians, is becauſe by the advantagious caſt of providence, they were born and educated in a nation where Chriſtianity is profeſſed, and eſtabliſhed by the laws of the *Countrey*: and if the wind ſhould turn, and the publick Authority think fit to *eſtabliſh* another Religion; they can ſhift their ſayls, and ſteer a contrary Courſe.

But now Reader let me tell thee, that if ever God ſend forth thoſe two grim *Sergeants*, his Law and thine own conſcience, to arreſt thee for thy ſins, if thou find thy ſelf dragging away by them towards that priſon from whence none return, that are once clapt up therein, and that in this unſpeakable diſtreſs Jeſus Chriſt manifeſt himſelf to thy ſoul, and open thy heart to receive him, and become thy ſurety with God, pay all thy debts, and cancel

all

all thy obligations, Thou wilt love him at another rate than others do: his blood will run deeper in thine eyes than it doth in the ſhallow apprehenſions of the world: he will be *altogether lovely*, and thou wilt account all things but dung and droſs in compariſon of the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt thy Lord. To work thy heart to this frame theſe things are written, which the Lord proſper upon thy ſoul by the bleſſing of his good Spirit upon them.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

FINIS.





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